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THE WORKS OF

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

IN TWENTY-FOUR VOLUMES

LIMITED EDITION

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Crime pursued by Justice and Divine Vengeance. —Page 31.

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THE WORKS OF THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

VOLUME NINE

TRANSLATED AND EDITED BY
PROFESSOR F. C. DE SUMICHRAST
Department of French, Harvard University

The LOUVRE

LEONARDO DA VINCI
ESTEBAN BARTOLOME MURILLO
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

With an Introduction by the Editor

NEW YORK · Published for Subscribers only
by GEORGE D. SPROUL · *M D CCCC I*

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Introduction

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THE LOUVRE

Introduction

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER is almost the ideal art critic: he is a painter who has given up painting to take to journalism, and who is not in the least swayed by any desire to praise his own works at the expense of others or to force a pet theory down the throats of his fellows and the public; and he is a writer absolutely without a peer when it is a question of describing form or colour. The deep, intense, all-pervading love of beauty which is his characteristic trait, makes him enjoy good pictures most keenly. The sentiment of profound satisfaction, of intellectual and esthetic delight which then fills his whole being, he communicates to and shares with the reader of his appreciations and criticisms. He describes the works of the great masters so lovingly, so sympathetically, so vividly that they acquire an additional value and exhibit new charms to the student. Gautier enters into the artist's state of

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mind; he feels as he must have felt, and thus brings out the real meaning and worth of the work.

He is neither narrow-minded nor indifferent in his tastes. He appreciates the Venetian painters and rejoices in the Florentines; the Romans attract him and the Spaniards make him enthusiastic; the French and Dutch, dissimilar as they are, have equal charms for him. He is tied by no doctrine, fettered by no national prejudice or preference, but wherever he perceives one of the manifold aspects of beauty he is drawn to it, and in his turn draws the reader. A Kermess by Teniers and a Coronation by Fra Angelico da Fiesole are at opposite poles of art, but he adores the Early master and deeply enjoys the realist. Holbein and Watteau are assuredly far from kin, save in that both seek beauty and attain it by different means and in different measure, but Gautier sees no reason why he should despise the one and praise the other only — both interest, both delight him. The severe art of the former satisfies one side of his nature, the delicate daintiness of the other answers to his sense of gracefulness and elegance.

This does not mean that he has not personal preferences, or that he places all painters on an equal foot-

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ing; far from it. He has unquestionably a marked affection for Leonardo da Vinci; perhaps, had he been compelled to make a single choice, to declare himself for one painter exclusively, — a cruel necessity to which he was happily not reduced, — Leonardo would have been awarded the palm, but Gautier would have always hungered after a Titian or two, a devotional picture by Murillo, a portrait by Velasquez, an Alchemist by Rembrandt, a Feast by Veronese, a Madonna by Raphael. At a time when the Early masters, whether Italian, German, or Flemish, were neither as well understood nor as much appreciated as they now are, Gautier lovingly pointed out their many beauties, the simplicity of their conceptions, the sincerity of their feeling, the tenderness of their manner, the artlessness of their expression, the purity of their thought. That they were practically ignored in no wise affected his opinion of them; they had striven, and successfully, to reproduce something of the glowing vision of Beauty, and the holiness of Art was on their work. This was, rightly enough, sufficient for him.

His account of the numberless masterpieces in the Louvre is fascinating reading. The man is happy;

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every fibre of his artistic being thrills with joy; he drinks deep of the satisfaction noble works give the soul lofty enough to understand them. His temperament is attuned to the divine harmonies of these wondrous compositions; there is perfect accord, complete understanding between them and him. It is no carping criticism he writes, for he cares not for the cheap sneer of the envious incapable. He sees beauty, his goddess, he beholds art, the object of his worship, in all these paintings; and what he sees, the reader must see also. The visitor who roams through the vast galleries must be made to understand and feel the power and charm of the wonderful works spread before him, for Gautier is no believer in the notion that the greatest beauty is at once and plainly perceived by every eye. Beauty is hidden from most mortals, and they must be touched by the wonder-worker ere they can discern it in its fulness. This is precisely what Gautier does in this book — he reveals masterpieces, trains the taste, educates the eye, broadens the mind.

His very language is the painter's speech; he writes with colours; his pen turns into a brush, and in his pages glow all the tints, shine all the lights, darken all the shadows of the originals.

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INTRODUCTION

The Museum of the Louvre, one of the very richest in Europe, was founded by the Convention, but fine collections of paintings, drawings, and other works of art existed in France long before that time. At that marvellous epoch called the Renaissance, Francis I, to whom the modern Louvre owes its existence, began to collect paintings and strove to found a school of artists inspired by Italian ideals. Andrea del Sarto was intrusted by him with large sums for the purchase of masterpieces; del Sarto squandered the money, but Primaticcio, the next to be selected, fulfilled his commission more honourably. Leonardo da Vinci, Perugino, Raphael, Titian are now represented by works acquired by the knightly King. Catherine de' Medici and Cardinal Mazarin were both great collectors—every one knows the clever way in which the latter managed to procure the Barberini Correggio. Louis XIV, whose love of pomp somewhat narrowed his views on art, added many valuable works. It was his secretary, Colbert, who negotiated the purchase of the famous Jabach collection. Versailles, Fontainebleau, the Tuileries, the Luxembourg, were full of rare and precious works of art.

It was necessary, however, to collect the finest of

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them in some one place where they would be readily accessible to the artists and the public, and under Louis XVI the question of creating a great Museum was earnestly discussed. The Comte d'Andiviller proposed to establish in the Great Gallery of the Louvre a permanent exhibition of the masterpieces of sculpture and painting of all ancient and modern schools, but the unsettled state of public affairs prevented the carrying-out of the project. On May 31, 1791, the National Assembly voted to transform the Tuileries and the Louvre into a national palace to be used partly as a royal residence, but mainly as an Art Museum. Two years later the Convention took up the project and carried it out, the Museum being opened in the month of August. Under the rule of the great Napoleon the collections in the Louvre were prodigiously enriched by the spoils of Italy, Spain, and Germany, but all these works, that combined to make Paris the greatest art centre in the world, had to be restored to their original owners when Napoleon fell. Even after undergoing these losses, the Museum remained one of the most remarkable in all Europe, and there can be no more delightful guide to its picture galleries than Théophile Gautier.

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The book itself, which bears in French the long title of "The Amateur's Guide to the Museum of the Louvre, followed by the Lives and Works of some Painters," was written for the *Paris Guide*, a publication comprising articles by most of the leading writers of France, and intended to enlighten visitors to the Exhibition of 1867. In 1882 this section was published in separate book form in the collection of Gautier's works, under the title given above. The essay on Leonardo da Vinci was intended to be the first of a series bearing the title "The Twelve Gods of Painting," to be published in *l'Artiste*. The Leonardo was the only one that appeared, in 1858; it was to have been followed by an essay on Fra Angelico da Fiesole. It was republished in 1863 in "The Gods and Demigods of Painting," to which Arsène Houssaye and Paul de Saint-Victor also contributed, and in 1882, like the essays on Murillo and Reynolds, it was added to the volume on the Louvre.

The essay on Murillo appeared first in *le Moniteur universel* of August 3, 1858; it was republished in *l'Artiste* of December 1, 1867. That on Reynolds was one of a series of articles on the Art Section of the London Exhibition of 1862, and appeared

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in *le Moniteur universel* of June 12 of that year. It was republished also in "The Gods and Demigods of Painting" in 1863 and in *l'Artiste* in 1868, before being finally incorporated in the Louvre volume.

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The Louvre

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THE LOUVRE

I

THE HALL OF THE SEVEN CHIMNEYS

IT is with a feeling of respectful apprehension that I approach the depository in which in successive generations the ideals of all nations have found a resting-place. Beauty has its temple here, and may be admired in its most diverse manifestations. In the centre of the great capital, the Museum is like the cameo that clasps a bracelet of precious stones. Art has marked it with its noblest seal, and it is an arduous task to find words worthy of such a subject.

Let us, then, enter without delay, — for we have a maze of masterpieces to traverse, to which my description shall serve as a guiding thread, — let us cross rapidly the great gallery of the Museum of Napoleon III, to which we shall return at some other time, refuse to be attracted by the terra-cottas of the Campana collection, and enter the great hall which is the

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Tribune of the French school. Here are met together Gros, Guérin, Girardet, Gérard, — the four G's, as it was customary formerly to call them, and to whom soon was to be added Géricault. Regnault, Fabre, Prud'hon, Mme. Vigée-Lebrun, and Decamps appear here also. Delacroix is wanting; but glory has to wait in the outer hall for a few years before being admitted to this temple where posterity begins. If I commence with the French school, it is because it is at home here. Like a well-bred mistress of a house, it stands in the first hall to receive visitors and to introduce them into that vast palace of art, which it well deserves to inhabit, and where it holds an honourable place among the masterpieces of all countries and of all schools.

Two great paintings by David fill up one whole side of the hall: "The Rape of the Sabines," and "Leonidas at Thermopylæ." David, whose fame was for a time dimmed by the dust raised about the year 1830 by the great battles between the Romanticists and the Classicists, will nevertheless remain henceforth a master, placed here above all attacks. He found and realised completely a new ideal, — a rare thing in art. Assuredly I have no intention of condemning the

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charming, clever, and thoroughly French art of the eighteenth century, but David did require to be possessed of remarkable power to break away so abruptly from his surroundings and withdraw from the silver and azure atmosphere in which fluttered Boucher's Cupids. People do not remember sufficiently nowadays, accustomed as they are to the pale reproductions which followed, how new at that time, how original, how unexpected, how spontaneous was the talent which at one time it was fashionable to look down upon and contemn, along with what was called in studios the Empire Style. Whatever may have been said to the contrary, Vien was not the precursor of David, and it is a waste of time to try to find ancestors for him. He had no precursor, he was born spontaneously, and the Latin line, *prolem sine matre creatam*, may be applied to his work. Never did a more indefatigable will pursue beauty, and if there are natures more fortunately endowed than was David's, there are none more firm, more determined, more resolved in the attainment of their aim. His was a virile genius; he loved art with a strong love and took it seriously. His passion for antiquity, a passion unknown to the eighteenth century, was no doubt responsible for his confounding

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Greek statuary with Roman statuary, but Winckelmann, the learned archæologist, committed the same mistake; criticism was not born then and the sculptures of the Parthenon were unknown; but David felt that true beauty lay there, and that it was in these precious remains that one must seek for beautiful lines, heroic feeling, and noble movements.

Besides, it would be a grave mistake to suppose that David did not have the right feeling for nature, or saw it merely through antiquity. His "Portrait of Pope Pius VII" and "Marat in his Bath" prove sufficiently that he was able to represent it in all its simplicity and energy. He was not repelled even by the horrible, in spite of his love for classical beauty. That his style, so noble and so bold, became academic later through imitation is a misfortune for which the artist cannot be held responsible; every original calls forth copies. No one can deny that David possessed a thorough knowledge of drawing, strengthened by the incessant study of models, unified and, as it were, brought back to a general type by his familiarity with antiquity. His composition was original, well balanced, and symmetrical like the plan of a beautiful tragedy. It cannot be denied that his figures sometimes turned to statues, and

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his groups were arranged as if they were a marble bas-relief; he often lacked quickening, pulsating life; but through his coldness, which is more apparent than real, intense passion, an unshakable faith, and an iron will, make themselves felt. During a very long period David's authority was immense, uncontested, unrivalled; he controlled like a despot the domain of art. Such dominion is not to be acquired without uncommon power, and — why should I not say it? — without genius. Now that the Romanticist school has enriched the modern palette by the addition of the colours of Venice, Antwerp, and Seville, the colouring of David may strike one as gray, dull, and somewhat cold, but it possesses a severe harmony which does not offend the eye. He has exceedingly true combinations, often very fine in tone. His colouring is historical, as it were, and clothes the idea with a suitable vestment, neither too real nor too abstract.

"The Sabine Women interposing between the Romans and the Sabines" strikes me as being one of the best of David's works. The figure of Romulus about to hurl his javelin at Tatius is of the most elegant juvenility. It is thus, indeed, that genius fancies the hero must have been. His brazen buckler, the

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boss of which is in the form of a she-wolf, forms in the centre of the canvas a luminous point to which the eye loves to return. His cleanly drawn muscular legs are as handsome as Apollo's. Tatius, who foresees the hurtling javelin, bends to avoid it. Hersilia springs forward with extended arms between the two combatants and seeks to separate them. Her head, which recalls the Greek type, seems to have been modelled after an antique marble, but the fresh, pure tints which colour her cheeks and her neck impart to them the flush of life. What could be lovelier than the group of children which the young mothers have brought to the battlefield to move the warriors and disarm their anger? The little child, still swathed, sucking its thumb, is charmingly artless. The proud port of the young equerries holding the horses in the right-hand corner of the painting, is full of grace. At the back are seen the buildings of nascent Rome and the continuation of the battle. Against the sky stand out the standards, formed of a handful of hay fastened to the shaft of a lance, which the world was to learn to gaze upon with terror. Everything in this remarkable composition is thought out, studied out, worked out, and carried to the highest perfection of which the artist

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was capable. With the means at his disposal he could not have brought about a greater result. Nothing is left to chance; the master will of the painter never sleeps. The colouring of "The Rape of the Sabines" is clearer, more harmonious, more limpid, and less laboured than in the other works of the painter.

"Leonidas at Thermopylæ" is a noble composition, animated by a truly heroic breath. In the narrow gorge which is to be their tomb, the young Spartans, obedient to their orders, prepare to sell their lives dearly. On the path that runs along the mountain-side are seen the slaves retreating with the mules and the useless baggage. In the centre of the painting Leonidas, seated by the altar of Hercules, appears to be sunk in the tranquil and virile thoughtfulness of a man who has accomplished self-sacrifice and casts a last glance upon the world which he will never again see. On the right a Spartan writes on the rock with the hilt of his sword the inscription which is to serve as an epitaph to the valiant phalanx: "Passer-by, go and tell the Lacedæmonians that we died here in obedience to their orders." Agis lays down the crown which he had worn during the sacrifice and exchanges it for his helmet; blind Eurytus is led by a helot and

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brandishes his lance; two young Spartans, rarely handsome, spring forward to take their arms hanging on the branches of the trees. The battle is about to begin, for a sentinel signals the approach of the enemy.

The impression made by the scene is solemn, and it is deepened by the brown tone of the colouring. It is beautiful; of a serious, somewhat cold beauty like certain passages in tragedy, but artists who can thoroughly carry out so vast a painting are rare at all times.

This hall also contains David's admirable "Portrait of Pope Pius VII" and "Belisarius asking for Alms." This is a reduction by Girodet and Fabre, retouched by the master, of the great painting exhibited on his return from Rome. We shall meet with David again in the newly opened galleries of the French school.

Two great paintings, narrow and tall, accompany "The Sabine Women interposing between the Romans and the Sabines" and "Leonidas at Thermopylæ." They are Gérard's allegorical figures, "Victory and Fame" on the one hand, and on the other "History and Poetry," which support the edges of a tapestry on which was supposed to be painted the "Battle of

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Austerlitz," which formed the ceiling of the Hall of the Council of State at the Tuileries. These figures, by the boldness of the drawing, the accuracy of the foreshortening, the lightness of the flying draperies, and the energetic wealth of colour, appear to me worthy of being placed among the best works of the artist, who has rarely attained to such breadth in decorative work.

"The Battle of Eylau," by Gros, is opposite "Bonaparte in the plague-hospital at Jaffa," another masterpiece by the same artist. In those days of classical reaction, when everything that was not Greek or Roman was judged frivolous and unworthy of occupying the attention of a true historical painter, it was bold indeed to attempt modern subjects, and to place on canvas living heroes in the costume and with the weapons they wore. That honour seemed to be reserved for the heroes of "De Viris Illustribus" alone; yet contemporary glories were great enough to tempt the artist. Gros became the painter of that epic which, save that it lacks a Homer, equals the "Iliad." Although he worshipped antiquity, Gros at bottom was a modern painter; he could see the contemporary world, and did not require the distance of ages to feel the

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beauty of a subject and to bring it out. It is a rare quality, especially when he who possesses it has the still rarer gift of idealising the truth, of representing grandiose realities. Besides, — and this was difficult in the environment in which he lived, and in view of the respect which he always testified to his master David, — Gros had a feeling for colour, life, and motion carried to the point of fury. His was an ardent, tumultuous, frantic genius, although he considered his gifts defects.

"Napoleon Visiting the Battlefield of Eylau and passing the Troops in Review" is full of sentiment and grand and sinister in effect. Mounted on his sorrel-coloured horse and wearing a pelisse of gray satin trimmed with fur (which, as a matter of fact, he did wear on that day), the Emperor is traversing the battlefield covered with dead and wounded. Never was that handsome Cæsar's head painted in more poetic, more sublime fashion. The hero contemplates with melancholy the grim spectacle, and raising to heaven his marble hand like that of an antique god, he seems, in the presence of the human hecatomb, to regret the price of glory. Lithuanians embrace his knees to implore mercy, while near him prances

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his mounted staff, among whom shines Murat in his theatrical costume. In the foreground are surgeons attending the wounded, half-buried in snow, broken gun-carriages, limbers, dead bodies, and all the hideous detritus of battle. At the back, under a sombre sky, stretches the vast white plain on which shows the silhouette of some horse trying to rise, and rayed by the distant lines of the troops that have fallen where they fought. Burning Eylau lights up the scene with its gloomy torch.

In "Bonaparte in the plague-hospital at Jaffa" Gros did not fear treating the horrible, which filled the artists of antiquity with dismay. A strange subject indeed, in an age of mythology and selected history,—a hospital filled with sick, dying, and dead! The artist has solved his problem in triumphant fashion. There exists a first sketch of this painting which Gros made under the direction of Denon, and in which he is absolutely faithful to the prosaic truth. It was merely a memorandum, and the painter, giving himself up to his genius, turned it into an epic. He threw down the walls of the room in which the historical fact occurred, and showed through the open tracery of the Moorish arcades the Eastern silhouette of Jaffa. The scene,

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thus broadened, enabled him to make plain to the eye the moral grandeur of the subject. In the centre of the composition the general-in-chief, Bonaparte, touches, with the security of the hero who trusts in his star, the plague spots of a half-naked sailor who has raised himself on the approach of the general. Berthier, Bessières, Commissary Daure, and Desgenettes, the chief surgeon, follow Bonaparte, terrified at his sublime imprudence. An officer suffering from ophthalmia, his eyes covered with a bandage, feels his way towards the radiant figure. In the corner are patients attended by Turks. Masclet, a young French surgeon who fell a victim to his devotion, supports on his knees a sick man. Dead bodies lie here and there on the floor, and convalescent plague patients take bread brought them by Arabs. Certainly the tragic horror is in no wise diminished, and yet there is a certain beauty in that heaping up of expiring or already dead bodies. The artist has exhibited the ugliness of it, but he has not sought it, and he idealises it either in a touching or a dramatic manner. His painting is like the description of the plague in Virgil, and still preserves the noble colours of the epic. When it was first exhibited it produced

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a tremendous sensation, and the public covered the frame of the great composition with palm branches and wreaths.

"The Deluge," "Endymion," and "Atala and Chactas" worthily represent Girodet in this *Salon Carré* of the French school. His was a cultured, ingenious, literary, poetic mind; he was equally good with his pen and his brush; he was learned and wrote verse. Although his most striking gift was painting, Girodet produced but a small number of pictures; on the other hand, he read the great poets, translated, imitated them, and better still, enriched them with drawings full of grace, elegance, and of a pure feeling for antiquity. He illustrated with innumerable compositions Virgil, Anacreon, Sappho, Bion, Moschus, Racine, and Ossian, the Scottish pseudo-Homer, who was then very popular. Although he is really a painter of very genuine talent and consummate skill, the literary man shows in the thoughtfulness and ingenuity of the composition. In the famous scene of "The Deluge," for instance, the dramatic interest is calculated, managed, and graduated with as much care as the most skilful stage-manager could bring to the arrangement of the final tableau of a sensational act. The waters have covered the earth;

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a single rock emerges, topped by a tree, to a branch of which clings with one hand, with all the energy of despair, a man bearing his father on his shoulder; with the other he holds by the right arm his wife, who presses to her breast a child enveloped in a mantle. From the head of the woman, thrown partly backward, falls long hair, to which clings an older child. This bunch of humanity swings pitifully over the abyss. One last effort and the summit will be reached. They will not be saved, for God is implacable, but it will be a momentary truce, an instant during which they may take breath in the midst of horrors. But, oh, woe! the branch bends, breaks, and the group so carefully composed is about to be engulfed by the flood on which floats already, under the green transparency of the wave, the ghastly body of a young maiden, the sister, or the eldest daughter perhaps, of the man who feels breaking away from the despairing clutch of his fingers his last, frail support.

I am very fond of "Endymion asleep." The ideal of beauty among the moderns is centred on woman, and modern painters have very seldom sought to realise it in the expression of the most perfect virile beauty. Among the Greeks that ideal was sexless,

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and men represented it fully as much as women. Apollo is no less handsome than Diana is beautiful; Paris may rival Helen. Girodet, in his "Endymion," has given us a truly characteristic painting. He has depicted the handsome sleeper in his grotto on Mount Latmos, lying on his cloak and a tiger-skin. His lovely frame has all the grace of youth, and shows in the penumbra white and perfect as the purest of antique statues. One understands how the chaste Phœbe should have fallen in love with that lovely youth and come down from heaven to visit him. Disguised as a Zephyr, but recognisable by his wings, Eros, parting the leaves, gives passage to the loving moonbeam which breaks passionately in bluish vapour upon the beautiful lips and marble breast of the sleeper. A dog sleeps in a corner of the painting; a bow and arrow lie by the side of Endymion. It does seem, with due regard to proportion, that Apelles would not have treated this subject in any other way. On the plane tree which shelters the sleep of Diana's beloved are written two mysterious words, the first of which is lost in the shadow of the leaves, and the second of which forms in Greek characters the word "Aer." What did this enigmatic inscription, half veiled by

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mysterious shadow, mean to the painter? I confess I do not know.

"Atala's Burial" is almost a modern work. In the treatment of his Romanticist subject Girodet preserved completely his elegant purity. Father Aubry supports Atala's body, while the mourning Chactas embraces her knees, and the two lower her into the grave dug under the vault of the grotto. Atala's pale hands press to her breast a crucifix of black wood; she preserves in death the supremest beauty. There can be nothing nobler, purer, or more touching than her head and bust painted by Girodet's chaste brush. On the wall of the grotto is seen the following inscription, which is Atala's epitaph: "I have passed like a flower, I have withered like the grass of the field."

Near "The Battle of Eylau" hangs Guérin's "Marcus Sextus," a painting which won political success, for it was supposed to be an allusion to the return of the *émigrés*. It represents a man proscribed by Scylla, returning to his family and finding his wife dead. Overborne by grief, he sits on the edge of the bed, and his daughter, half sunk to the ground, weeps as she embraces her father's knees. "Marcus Sextus" is an imaginary personage, for his name is not met with

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in history. He is the symbol of proscription and its sad consequences, and the painter has attained the end he aimed at. His composition is both dramatic and touching.

In "Clytemnestra" we have a piece of fine tragic staging. The purple curtain, through which flickers the light of a lamp, casts upon the murderers a bloody reflection terrible and lugubrious to behold. Ægisthus urges on from behind Clytemnestra, who hesitates, as thought urges the hand. Agamemnon, king of men, leader of nations, sleeps in a noble pose on his couch. Balzac, in his "Physiology of Marriage," wished that every husband might sleep as majestically as the King of Argos. It did not, however, prevent his being murdered by his wife.

"Phædra and Hyppolitus" has much elegance and nobility. Racine has never been illustrated more poetically. Hyppolitus is quite charming for so unhappy a prince. In Phædra's gesture Girodet seems to have anticipated Mlle. Rachel.

Below the "Phædra and Hyppolitus" hangs Gérard's "Cupid and Psyche," a charming composition full of delicate poesy. Psyche, the lower portion of whose body is enveloped in transparent gauze, receives with

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amazement the first kiss of Love, who is gracefully bending towards her. The unknown sensation moves her; she puts her hand to her agitated heart; feelings hitherto dormant awaken in her, and upon her brow flutters the butterfly of the soul. It would be difficult to render better the virginal body of early youth than Gérard has done in this exquisite figure. Cupid also is charming, and his great hawk-wings prevent his looking like the doll Cupids of boudoirs. His slender form and proud elegance recall the Cupid of antiquity, the beautiful Greek Eros. This lovely group stands out brightly against a background of blue sky and wooded hills. It is to be regretted that the excessive care of the painter's touch should have imparted to the flesh the tone of ivory and porcelain.

I have so far spoken of the purely classical school, but with Prud'hon we enter a sphere in which David's influence is no longer felt. Gros himself experienced it. We are now in the presence of an artless, spontaneous genius, which seeks the ideal unaided and along new ways. At the time in which he lived, Prud'hon was an unexpected fact. He created a new form of grace and opened an unknown vein of beauty. His conception of antiquity differs entirely from that of his

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contemporaries. The statues which David's pupils drew with sculptural coldness, he appears to see bathed in moonlight, silvered with soft rays, laved in shadow and reflections, undulating with seductive contours, a vague mist enveloping and softening their lines. He applies Correggio's softness to the mythology of the time of the Empire. He possesses a vaporousness, a mysteriousness, a reverie, and a divine smile which are peculiarly his own. But do not imagine that his talent is effeminate, for Prud'hon can be, when necessary, virile, grave, and great.

What more tragic than "Crime Pursued by Justice and Divine Vengeance"? Upon a wild landscape, a mass of stones and brambles, a broad moon pours down a flood of livid light and seems to hang in the heavens like a lamp. Silvered by its pale beams, the body of the victim lies on the ground in the neglect of death, like another Abel slain by another Cain. Its elegant, clean forms, its beautiful head thrown back amid a mass of hair, contrast strikingly with the ignoble, low, mean, bestial appearance of the murderer, who hastens away clutching his bloody dagger. The crime has barely been committed, and already in the heavens, raying the air with their rapid flight, the avenging

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deities soar with hurrying wings and flying draperies, about to swoop down upon the trembling assassin. The one holds a torch which casts a reddish glow upon the cold reflections of the moon; the other presses to its breast the balances of law and the sword that punishes the guilty. The head of Vengeance, — or of Nemesis, if you prefer the antique name, — lighted by the torch, is a masterpiece of colouring and modelling. That of Themis expresses calm severity and serene indignation, entirely divine in character.

Although the scene is drawn from the realm of allegory, the truth of the colouring and of the effect gives it a surprising aspect of reality. The broad shadows, the faint reflections, the pale light which touches the contours of the objects and of the figures, produce involuntary terror, and one shudders like the murderer. I know nothing finer or nobler in any school than these two deities that swoop with such sure, tranquil speed through the blue air of night, nothing more dramatic and sinister than the profile of the assassin, or more touching than the victim.

"The Assumption of the Virgin," intended for the chapel of the Tuileries, is of quite another character. Prud'hon wished to paint a heavenly festival, and he

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has carried elegance, grace, and freshness almost to the point of profane coquetry. An amorous breath upraises a charming group: it would look more like Flora upborne by the Zephyrs, were it not that the Virgin's head, half thrown back in the celestial light, expresses the deepest ecstasy and the delirious joy of a divine soul which ascends once more to its home. The angels surrounding the Virgin and supporting her are indescribably charming. Prud'hon, as the Greeks in the case of Hermaphrodite, possessed the secret of uniting in either body all the charms of the youth and of the maiden, and of creating, so to speak, a third sex more perfect than either; but instead of an equivocal voluptuousness, these divine youths are full of a caressing and devout innocence. The colouring of this charming picture forms a perfect bouquet.

I must say a word of the magnificent "Portrait of Madame Jarre," which might well take its place by the side of the finest works of Titian, Van Dyck, or Velasquez. It represents a velvety-eyed brunette in all the fulness of her beauty. She wears a low-cut dress of white gauze embroidered with gold, with the waist up to her bosom in Empire fashion. The light spreads complacently over a bosom most admirably modelled,

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which seems to swell with the breath of life, and the contours of her seductive face melt into suave shadows that Correggio alone could have rivalled. Prud'hon, who was thoroughly acquainted with the technical side of his art, too much neglected by the artists of his day, sketched out his compositions in monochrome, then painted them over with glacis, and used white in the shadows instead of deepening them with bitumen and Naples yellow. The consequence is that his paintings have preserved their bloom, while those of his contemporaries have lost their tone, have become green in every shaded part, and have cracked through the abuse of siccatives. During his lifetime Prud'hon, who belonged to the flock of unfortunate talents of which Auguste Barbier speaks in his sonnet on Masaccio, was not as highly thought of as he deserved; more popular reputations occupied the stage; but his fame has grown steadily, and his halo becomes more and more luminous. At the present day his smallest paintings are worth their weight in gold.

Below the "Marius" by Drouais, the "Education of Achilles" by Regnault, and Fabre's "Philoctetes," fair paintings which it is sufficient to name, shines a huge canvas "The Wreck of the Medusa" by Géri-

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cault. On either side of this masterpiece are placed, as guards of honour, the "Officer of the Light Cavalry of the Imperial Guard Charging," and the "Wounded Cuirassier going to the Rear." The "Officer of Light Cavalry," exhibited in 1812 under the title of "Equestrian Portrait of M. Dieudonné serving in the Guards of the Empire," was painted in twelve days with the dash, fury, and audacity of genius. At the sight of this strange painting, so violent, so full of motion, so proud, so splendid in drawing and colour, David, terrified, cried, "Where does that come from? I do not know the touch." It came from a new idea, from a seething brain which the old forms could not satisfy and which burst the old moulds. Géricault was then twenty, and his teachers kindly advised him to give up painting, for which he was not born. They sought contour and motionless purity; he strove after life, passion, and colour. He worshipped Rubens, then proscribed; all the violent, all the fiery painters, Michael Angelo, Rembrandt; he was a Romanticist long before Romanticism. So Géricault could not get along with the reigning school. His "Light Cavalryman," turning so proudly upon his rearing horse, its quarters covered with a tiger-skin, while its fore-feet

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seem to beat the air, produced, on its appearance, a sort of stupor. The public did not know whether to admire or blame, and in case of doubt people generally do the latter; but the "Light Cavalryman" possessed an imperious sort of beauty which compelled attention, and along with many hostile criticisms were heard enthusiastic praises. Originality is what succeeds least in France.

The "Wreck of the Medusa," which Géricault painted in the foyer of the Théâtre Favart, on his return from Italy, proved to be more than an event, it was a revolution. It is difficult to understand at the present day how deeply such a subject was bound to shock the public, and especially the artists of that time. Subjects drawn from mythology or classical antiquity were alone considered worthy of an historical painter. The idea of crowding upon a raft beaten by the waves a crowd of wretches worn out by privation, the strongest of whom could scarce maintain themselves upon heaps of dying and dead, would certainly appear, and did, as a matter of fact, appear monstrous. It might have been pardoned had the shipwreck represented been Homeric or Virgilian, but these poor devils were modern, real contemporaries; the disaster was no older

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than 1816, and the painting which represented it with all the horror of truth was exhibited in the Salon of 1819. Thanks to one of those fits of blindness which posterity can with difficulty understand, although they recur at the appearance of every original genius, this masterpiece was greatly condemned as detestable. People remained insensible to the dramatic effect of the gloomy sky, of the sinister green sea breaking in foam upon the bodies tossing between the spars of the raft, mocking with its briny waters the thirst of the dying, and tossing upon its vast billows the frail plank upbearing agony and despair. The profound knowledge of anatomy, the powerful colouring, the broad touch, the grandiose energy which recalled Michael Angelo, called forth but disdain and reprobation.

After Géricault's death, which occurred in 1824, the "Wreck of the Medusa," which the artist's heirs wanted to cut into four pieces because the size of the canvas made it difficult to store, was saved by the cares of M. Dreux d'Orcy and the Count de Forbin. Purchased for six thousand francs, this masterpiece, one of the glories of the French school, was not cut up, and now beams, admired by all, upon its vast wall.

It would be unjust to leave this hall without a word

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of praise for the elegant, graceful, and very French talent of Madame Vigée-Lebrun, which is seen here in two charming portraits. If I do not mention Decamps' "Towing Horses" it is because I mean to wait until the artist is represented by some painting such as "The Defeat of the Cymri," "The Bazaar at Smyrna," or "The Torture of Hooks."

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II

THE GALLERY OF APOLLO

LET us now traverse the gallery of Apollo to reach the Salon Carré, where are collected the masterpieces of the various schools. It is a magnificent gallery, admirably restored, the centre filled with glass cases containing silver vases, golden cups, ornaments in onyx, jade, gems, enamels, and all those precious objects in which the workmanship is of greater value than the material, precious though it may be. There can be seen the models which Blaise des Goffes renders so accurately. Portraits of painters, sculptors, and architects in Gobelins tapestry set within rich frames adorn the walls.

On reaching the centre of the gallery, do not forget to look up, and you will be dazzled by Eugène Delacroix's "Apollo Purging the Earth of Monsters," which swarm in the primitive mud. The god, springing upon his golden car, drawn by horses as radiant as fire, as brilliant as light, bends forward and shoots his

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arrows at the deformed creatures, the abortions of unsuccessful Nature, which writhe hideously in convulsions of agony. His sister Diana helps him in the divine task of making light succeed shadow, harmony chaos, beauty ugliness. The chorus of beneficent gods has joined him, and the genii of evil are hurled into the abyss. Admire in the foreground the nymph seen from behind, near whom rolls a panther, and acknowledge that, so far as colour goes, France has nothing more to envy Italy, Flanders, or Spain. Delacroix in that work, in which his fiery talent has been given free scope, gave proof of an understanding of decorative painting surpassed by none. It is impossible, while preserving one's own genius, to conform more admirably to the style of the gallery and of the time. It might be a flamboyant and romantic Le Brun.

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III

THE SALON CARRÉ

IN this vast and magnificent hall, hung with sombre tan-coloured tapestry in imitation of Cordova leather, with ebony mouldings, and which is faultless, save perhaps for its great elevation, which causes the light to fall from rather high up on the paintings, has been brought together the most superb assembly of painters in the world: Leonardo da Vinci, Perugino, Raphael, Andrea del Sarto, Sebastiano del Piombo, Giorgione, Paolo Veronese, Titian, Tintoretto, Guercino, Guido, Francia, Ghirlandajo, Van Eyck, Antonello da Messina, Murillo, Ribera, Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck, Claude Lorrain, Poussin, Le Sueur, Jouvenet, Philippe de Champagne, Gaspar Netscher, Metsu, Ostade, Gerard Dow, and a few more, whose names might make a litany. The only one wanting is Velasquez, for whom a corner should have been kept in this glorious reunion of paintings for his little "Infanta Marguerite." A *Tribuna* in

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which the great Don Diego Velasquez da Silva is not represented will always appear incomplete.

On entering this sanctuary of art, in the centre of which now rises an elegant statue of Diana, on the very place formerly occupied by a table the top of which consisted of a painting, my first impulse is always to contemplate before anything else Leonardo da Vinci's "La Gioconda," the miracle of painting, the work in which, in opinion, art most nearly approached to perfection.

My admiration and love for that divine Mona Lisa del Gioconda are not of recent growth, and many a passion for a real being has lasted less long. It is twelve years since I wrote the following lines, somewhat too enthusiastic, perhaps, but which exactly express the impression I felt: —

"'La Gioconda,' thou sphinx of beauty, that smilest so mysteriously in Leonardo da Vinci's frame, and seemest to propose to the admiration of centuries a riddle they have not yet solved! an invisible attraction always draws me back to thee! But, indeed, who has not spent long hours before that head bathed in twilight half-tints, enveloped in transparent veils, and whose features, melodiously melting into a violet vapour, ap-

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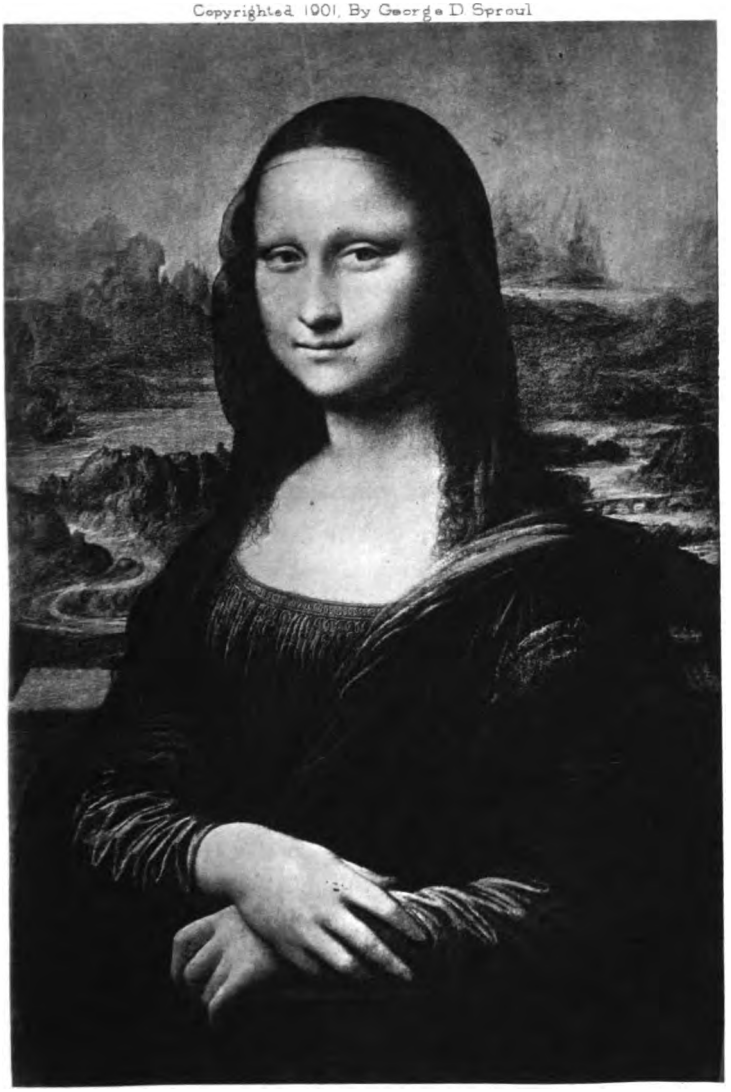

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pear like the creation of a dream through the black gauze of sleep? From what planet fell into the midst of this azure landscape that strange being with its glance full of the promise of unknown voluptuousness, and its divinely ironical expression? Leonardo da Vinci imprints on his faces such a mark of superiority that one is troubled in their presence; the shadows of their deep eyes conceal secrets forbidden to the profane, and the curl of their mocking lip would suit the omniscient gods, quickly contemptuous of human vulgarity. What troublous fixity in the dark eyes, what a supreme sardonic touch on the lips formed like Cupid's bow! Does it not seem as though La Gioconda were the Isis of a mystic religion, who, believing herself alone, draws aside the folds of her veil, careless whether the imprudent man who should surprise her should go mad and die? Never did the ideal of woman assume a more irresistibly seductive form. You may be sure that had Don Juan met Mona Lisa, he would have saved himself the trouble of writing three thousand names of women on his list: he would have written but one, for the wings of his desire would have refused to bear him farther; they would have melted and fallen in the black sunshine of those eyes."

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Many a time since then have I seen her again, that adorable Gioconda, and my declaration of love does not strike me as too fervid. She is still there, smiling with mocking voluptuousness upon her innumerable lovers, on her brow the serenity of the woman sure of being eternally beautiful, and who feels herself superior to the ideal of all poets, of all artists.

The divine Leonardo spent four years in painting this portrait, which he could not bring himself to abandon, and which he never considered completely finished. During the sittings musicians performed in order to enliven the lovely model, and to prevent her charming features from assuming a look of weariness and fatigue.

Is it to be regretted that the particular kind of black which Leonardo employed, and which he had invented, should have been so largely used in the tints of the Mona Lisa and have imparted to them that delightful violet harmony, that abstract tonality which seems to be the colour of the ideal? I think not, for mystery is added to charm, and perhaps the painting in its original bloom was less seductive than it is now.

What divine suavity, what celestial intimacy, in "The Virgin and Saint Anne!" With charming familiarity the Virgin, leaning upon the lap of Saint

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Anne, bends tenderly towards the Child Jesus who is playing with a lamb. It is like a sweet chain of protection binding together old age, childhood, and the innocent animal. Saint Anne's head is lovely; never was an old woman represented more charmingly by an artist's brush. The outrage of time has, in her case, turned to a caress, her beautiful wrinkles are most graceful. The Virgin is of the type peculiar to Leonardo da Vinci, — sweet, tender, smiling, penetrated with a secret joy which radiates luminously around her. She is so angelic and so feminine, so maidenly and so maternal at one and the same time. Her lovely body in its bent attitude yields with such suppleness under its chaste draperies that it seems like a pure Greek statue bowed by the whim of the painter. Illusion may be forgiven when one sees the tip of that foot with its elegant, slender toes, like the foot of a goddess of antiquity, which emerges from below the dress. The Child Jesus has all the grace of childhood, which no one ever reproduced like Leonardo da Vinci; and the scene, so human in its cordiality, so familiar, so tender, while still so divine, is set in the midst of a lovely, bright landscape, with azure distances and those bluish mountains the singular breaks and ravines in

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which Leonardo was so fond of. The colouring in this marvellous painting is not darkened, as in the other works of the artist; it has remained golden, amber-like, and of an exquisite *vaghezza*.

As a painter Leonardo da Vinci is refined, delicate, exquisite, and almost subtle, full of a mysterious charm which particularly delights refined people; but he can be, when he chooses, grand, noble, profound, and pathetic, as he has proved in his sublime fresco of "The Last Supper," alas! half effaced, the shadow of a masterpiece, by the side of which all other masterpieces pale.

Wonderfully endowed, Leonardo knew everything and divined everything; he was at once painter, sculptor, architect, engineer, musician, and poet; and in his manuscripts, written in a reversed hand, — for there was always a touch of singularity in Leonardo's actions, — most modern discoveries are already foreseen. He was one of the first, as he was the greatest, of the encyclopædic minds of the Renaissance.

The Louvre possesses four other paintings by this divine master, which we shall come upon presently.

After Leonardo, Raphael alone can be spoken of, for he alone is pure, noble, and elevated enough to

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prevent the transition being too abrupt. Although his life was too brief, Raphael traversed the whole realm of art; his three manners sum up all possible phases of painting. He starts from Perugino in the "Sposalizio," and almost reaches to Le Brun in the "Battle of Constantine." From Gothic artlessness, he reaches in a few years the summit of art, the absolute perfection, beyond which nothing but decadence is possible. Unquestionably Raphael was marvellously endowed; he possessed genius, beauty, happiness, an amiable and charming character which made everything easy; but his supreme quality was the harmony resulting from the facility he possessed of incorporating into his talent, with an amazing accuracy of proportion, whatever struck him as beautiful. A few remains in the Baths of Titus, a few statues brought to light, initiated him into the feeling for antiquity which he appropriated without the least effort; a portière raised by Bramante in the Sistine Chapel sufficed to add to his natural charm the loftiness and vigour of Michael Angelo.

"Saint Michael overthrowing Satan" occupies in a corner of the Salon, on a panel with an ebony frame, a place which might be considered the place of honour, if there could be one in a Tribuna where every painting

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is a masterpiece. The simple and beautiful composition proves how naturally sublime was Raphael, and with what easy flight he reached the loftiest summits of art. The warrior archangel, wearing a breastplate of steel and gold to mark his power — for he needs no armour — descends from heaven with half-opened wings like a bird about to alight. His scarf flies out behind him in fluttering folds, and this scarf, indeed, has three ends, a piquant singularity which at first is not noticed, and which reasoning alone accounts for. His foot, divinely elegant, accustomed as it is to treading on light, barely touches the shoulder of the demon, thrown to the ground and writhing in powerless rage. The archangel lowers the point of his lance against his enemy, but it is merely in sign of triumph; the struggle had ended before it had begun. It is impossible to express with more ideal nobility than Raphael has done, the careless and somewhat disdainful serenity of the archangel carrying out God's orders against the rebellious angel, once his companion in glory.

Besides the legendary meaning of the scene which he painted, it would seem that the artist desired to represent eternal beauty driving into the abyss ugliness in revolt against supreme harmony. In the beautiful

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angel, so pure, so gentle, and yet so proud, we seem to catch a glimpse of Raphael himself repelling trivial and grimacing forms. What aerial lightness, what delicate energy, the product of the will rather than of the muscles! What supernatural elegance in the flying figure, which is in no wise vaporous, however, and which is drawn with almost sculptural firmness. It soars by the impulse of its own motion, by the irresistible dash of its own outline. The marvellous work is signed, not in a corner of the painting, but upon the very edge of the archangel's vestment, where is to be read the following inscription: *Raphael Urbinas pingebat, M. D. XVIII.* The painter apparently desired to imprint his name indelibly upon his work.

A picture which Raphael painted at the same time, and which was intended for the Queen, as the "Saint Michael" was intended for Francis I, equals it in beauty. It is the "Holy Family." Raphael, who had attained the apogee of his talent, has never produced anything more perfect. Painting has never passed the bounds which he then reached, and it is doubtful whether it can ever overpass that supreme limit at which human means fail genius in its endeavour to attain the highest ideal. The whole composition is balanced in

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a most perfect rhythm, as harmonious as that of music, and the lines are combined and correspond in the formation of the happiest contrasts. The beauty of the drawing, the nobility of the faces, the purity of the outlines, the splendid flow and the exquisite taste of the draperies, leave nothing to be envied in Greek statuary. In this masterpiece Christian spirituality has idealised plastic perfection; it is not only beautiful bodies that we behold, but divine souls; Raphael created them in his own image.

The Child Jesus springs from his cradle into the arms of the Virgin seated on the right and bending towards him with graceful maternal complacence; Saint John, presented by Saint Elizabeth seated on the left, worships the Child God; an angel, divinely elegant, scatters flowers over the Virgin, as if to conform with Virgil's line, *Manibus date lilia plenis;* a second angel is prostrating himself, and Saint Joseph contemplates the scene with a quiet, majestic air.

No one has equalled Raphael in imparting to the Mother of Jesus a beauty at once ideal and real, maidenly and feminine, a purity of glance, a charming smile which is the smile of the soul even more than that of the lips. He has forever settled the type of

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the Madonna, and it is always under the features of one of Raphael's Virgins that the devotee, the poet, the artist thinks of "Mary, full of grace." He has relieved her of her mediæval sadness, suffering, and ugliness; he has clothed her with all the ideal perfections which are attributed to her in the litanies,—Star of the Morning, Mystical Rose, Gate of Ivory; he has made her the ideal of modern beauty, as Venus was the ideal of antique beauty.

I am speaking now of the Madonna such as the painter of Urbino conceived her in the later portion of his life, when he had reached the perfection of his third manner. In his second and in his first manner, when he was still under the influence of Perugino's teaching, Raphael imagined the Virgin in a more artless, timid, though none the less charming way, which yet smacked somewhat of archaism. He then placed her amid landscapes adorned with towers and buildings which have nothing in common with Judæa, and against the bright sky he outlined slender little trees with scant foliage. The "Belle Jardinière," the name given to the charming composition in which are met the Virgin, Saint John, and the Child Jesus, in a small frame arched above, is not draped after the antique fashion

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like the Virgin of the "Holy Family." She wears a red bodice trimmed with black, like a mere *contadina*; she is, besides, more of a girl and less of a woman; her features, exquisitely delicate and pure, have an almost ingenuous grace. One feels that she is less the Queen of Paradise, the Queen of Angels, than the woman who, in spite of her humility, is conscious of having brought forth a God. She is as much the elder sister of Jesus, watching him at play with his little comrade, as the Mother of the divine Child. Saint John, kneeling, presents to Jesus a frail cross of reeds, an image of the cross of Calvary. It is only a plaything now, later it will be the instrument of execution, but no one thinks of that in the happy and innocent group.

With what tender grace is maternal adoration expressed in "The Virgin with the Veil"! The Blessed Virgin, her head encircled by a small diadem, kneels before the Child Jesus asleep on the pillow. She softly raises the veil that covers Him and shows Him to the little Saint John kneeling by her side. Perhaps it was from this picture that originated the popular expression, "He sleeps like the Infant Jesus." How easy, how softly relaxed is the plump, dimpled body of the Child

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resting under its Mother's eye! One could swear to seeing the soft perspiration of sleep pearling the satin-like skin. And how gently pure is the profile of the Virgin, how artless that of Saint John, clasping his little hands and praying in ecstasy! This Virgin with the diadem, while it is not yet the equal of the "Madonna della Sedia" or the Madonna of "The Holy Family," has no longer the rustic simplicity of the "Belle Jardinière."

Notice also in the Salon Carré two small paintings by Raphael in his first manner, so charming, which yet bears the imprint of the naïve art of the ante-Renaissance days. "Saint Michael fighting the Dragon," that curls around his leg, amidst chimerical monsters, burning ruins, and demons torturing the damned, might be, like "Saint George smiting the Dragon," which he has already pierced with his lance, a marvellous miniature taken from a romance of chivalry and representing a paladin achieving an adventure in spite of the spells of a necromancer.

After the chaste grace of Raphael, one may admire the voluptuous grace of Corregio, who created a whole delightful world of undulating shapes, heavenly smiles, silvery lights, transparent shadows, and magical reflec-

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tions. If Correggio was not absolutely the inventor of chiaroscuro, he at least drew from it new harmonies and effects hitherto unknown. His knowledge of foreshortening and of the perspective of bodies enables him, by unexpected aspects, by the curve of lines, heads thrown back or forward, and boldly projected poses, to change the usual aspect of figures and groups; for that delicate and tender painter is ever a deeply learned man. He possesses force as well as grace, and the giant apostles in the Duomo at Parma prove it. No one, not even Michael Angelo, whose "Last Judgment" is of a later date, drew in grander or finer fashion. Then Correggio's drawing is enveloped in admirable colouring. He is perhaps the most original of painters. He taught himself, and drew his whole inspiration from himself. It has been impossible to ascertain accurately the names of any of his masters, and he does not appear to have ever left his native country. His supposed trips to Rome, Venice, and Florence are still hypothetical. He owes everything to his own genius, and to nature which had endowed him so richly. He attained perfection at once and almost without an effort; he was scarcely twenty when he was in full possession of his talent. Scarcely in his

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first two or three paintings are noticeable a certain dryness and symmetry which connect them with the works of the school that preceded him. Like Raphael he traversed, in the course of a very short life, the whole cycle of art; with this difference, however, that he worked alone, and did not have, to carry out his thoughts, an army of enthusiastic and respectful pupils who, for the most part, were great painters themselves.

Although he was not poor, as biographers, who are fonder of pathos than of truth, have said, he did not enjoy the brilliant and happy life, favoured by gods and men, which was the reward of the Angel of Urbino. Although he spared nothing to make his paintings last, and employed the most expensive colours, the most carefully prepared canvases and panels, his masterpieces were during his life-time bought for comparatively low prices; but posterity, seduced by the intoxicating charm of his Virgins and his nymphs, has given him a throne of ivory among the gods of art in the Olympus of painting.

The Louvre is not so rich in Correggios as the Dresden Gallery, but the two paintings of the master which it possesses are of the first rank, and count as gems in the master's casket. The one is a profane,

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the other a sacred subject, and each exhibits the genius of the artist under a different aspect. Every one knows the "Antiope" and the "Mystical Marriage of Saint Catharine."

Antiope, idly lying upon a blue drapery, one arm curved above her head, sleeps without suspecting that the secret of her charms has been betrayed, and that Jupiter, under the aspect of a satyr, but still preserving under his disguise his majestic Olympian beauty, has, with a libertine and inquisitive hand, raised the veil which concealed them. Bending over Antiope, the god admires her fair body relaxed in sleep. Notwithstanding the warm, fair whiteness, bathed in half-tints that soften the contours and impart to it the roundness of life, under the torso so tenderly and softly graceful one feels the anatomical details which are lost in the mass, thanks to a science concealed under beauty; for it must not be forgotten that Correggio, with Michael Angelo, was one of the best draughtsmen in the world. At the feet of Antiope, Cupid, his quiver lying near him, pretends to be asleep, and lies on the sward in an attitude of childish gracefulness; but it is quite certain that he sleeps with one eye open, sees what is going on, and favours it. A rich landscape, kept well down,

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in tones of tawny velvet, forms the background of this voluptuous mythological scene, and brings out superbly the warm fairness of Antiope, who forms the central light in the painting. Although she has the body of a nymph, Antiope is still a woman; she is no mere coloured marble, she lives, she breathes, and her breath makes her bosom rise and fall.

Correggio gives an almost childish grace to his heads of women and Virgins, and in his work the heads, which are younger than the beauteous, fully developed bodies, preserve an air of innocent and candid astonishment. Most piquant indeed is this contrast, which is managed with infinite art. In the "Marriage of Saint Catharine" the Virgin possesses that bloom of extreme youth, and the saint herself is scarcely older. The lines of that charming composition are most graceful. The Child Jesus is seated on his mother's lap, and she helps him to place the ring on Saint Catharine's finger. It is the loveliest bouquet of heads that a painter ever grouped in the centre of a painting. They seem to be made of the substance of lilies, so pure, delicate, and noble are they, with their slender fingers with the tips a little turned up. The expression of loving ecstasy of the saint, who weds with all her soul and for eternity

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the unthinking Child, is admirably rendered. Behind Saint Catharine stands Saint Sebastian, marvellously beautiful, who has, thanks to the arrows in his hand — the symbol of his martyrdom — the look of a Cupid.

In the background are represented scenes of the martyrdom of the two saints; but these episodes, justified by the custom of those days, which tolerated double or triple subjects in the same canvas, are of small size, lightly sketched in, lost in shadow, and so treated that they do not draw the attention away from the principal subject. They have to be sought out in the very background, and the eye is almost unwilling to leave the delightful figures of the Virgin, Saint Catharine, and the Child Jesus, on which it rests lovingly.

Under the golden glow which time has cast over the painting, one feels a silvery freshness, bluish reflections, pearly tones, and the whole series of charming tints forming part of that mystery of chiaroscuro, in which Correggio has absolutely no rival.

Above the "Antiope," Guido's "Dejanira" traverses a stream, standing on the back of the Centaur Nessus.

I began with Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Correggio; but — I am quite sure of it — your gaze, while fixed upon the wonderful marvels I am describing,

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turns almost invincibly towards the great canvas by Paolo Veronese, which represents the "Wedding at Cana." As soon as one enters the Salon Carré, one's eyes are attracted by that superb work, which, as regards composition, arrangement, and colour is the very highest expression of decorative painting. The Venetian genius breathes in full in that splendid masterpiece with its cosmopolitan carelessness, its mingling of all costumes, its love of pomp, its theatrical and decorative taste, its passion for life and brilliancy. There is no painting more thoroughly Venetian than the "Wedding at Cana," which, owing to an intentional anachronism, does not take place in Judæa, in some wretched whitewashed house, but on the banks of the Grand Canal or the Brenta, in the marble palace of a wealthy senator of the Most Serene Republic, whose name is inscribed in the Golden Book, — a Foscari, a Loredan, a Vendramin, or some other of that race whose portraits have been handed down to us by Titian and Paris Bordone. What Veronese sought was to display in a great banquet hall, amid elegant and grand architecture, a varied multitude of faces and costumes; to exhibit the sheen of satin and velvet, and especially to manifest strength, health, and the joy of

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life in radiant faces free from care, and in robustly superb bodies. As for the religious side of the subject, the painter thought as little about it as the spectator who contemplates the painting. It is quite true that in the centre of the horse-shoe table are seen the Christ and His divine Mother, recognisable by their haloes and their garments, which are not cut in the latest Venetian fashion; indeed, the Christ is even making the sign which is to work the miracle and change the water into wine, while servants pour into great, superbly chased amphoræ the tasteless drink transformed into a generous liquor. But who could be induced to believe that that sumptuous palace, with its pillars of marble and porphyry, its rich balustrades showing white against the azure of the sky, has so poorly provided a cellar? The wines of Spain, of Cyprus, and Samos must abound there. But what matters it, after all? The object is to feast the eye with the most gorgeous spectacle that the palette can realise, and assuredly the artist has well carried out his purpose. It is pleasure in painting itself carried to its highest power, apart from the idea, from the subject, from historical truth. One is charmed and delighted by the purely picturesque means employed; by the purity of the tone, the har-

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mony of the tints, the equilibrium of the forms. There are certain passages of Rossini's music which have given me the same feeling of simply artistic pleasure as Paolo Veronese's paintings. They enchant through the very beauty of the melody itself, independently of any thought, any passion, any drama. It is a dilettante's enjoyment, and no people were greater dilettanti than the Venetians.

In this gigantic composition, one of the largest ever undertaken in painting, Paolo Veronese has introduced the portraits of a great number of famous contemporary personages. A written tradition, preserved in the convent of San Giorgio Maggiore, where the "Wedding at Cana" was originally placed, and of which Zanetti obtained a copy, gives the names, like one of those keys which enable one to penetrate the secret of La Bruyère's "Caractères." According to this key, the bridegroom, seated on the left of the table, is Don Alphonso d'Avalos, Marquis de Guast. A negro, standing on the other side, offers him a cup of the miraculous wine. The young woman seated by him represents Eleanor of Austria, Queen of France; behind her the jester, with his quaint cap and bells, shows his face between two pillars. Close to the

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young woman is seen Francis I; then comes Mary, Queen of England, wearing a yellow robe. Farther on, Soliman I, Emperor of the Turks, seems in no wise surprised at being present with Jesus Christ at a wedding in Cana. Besides, there is plenty of company for him. A negro prince, no doubt a descendant of the Abyssinian king and mage, or of Prester John, speaks to the servants, while Vittoria Colonna, Marchioness of Pescara, is biting a toothpick at the corner of the table. The Emperor Charles V, careless of chronology, wears quietly round his neck the order of the Golden Fleece.

There is a space left free in the centre of the painting by the three sides of the horse-shoe table; Veronese has represented himself in it, with his friends, playing upon different instruments. The musician who plays the viola, wearing a sort of white damask dalmatic, is the artist himself, Paolo Cagliari; behind him is Tintoretto, who accompanies him; Titian plays on the double-bass, and old Bassano on the flute. The elegant individual holding a cup of wine, who seems to be drinking a health, is Benedetto Cagliari, Paolo's brother. Upon the platform along the balustrade there is a host of servants bearing dishes, or fetching plates and ewers

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from huge dressers which can be seen between the pillars. Curious spectators cluster on the projections of the building. There are some even on the Campanile, that stands out white against the light blue of the sky, on which float a few milky clouds, — a sky to be seen in Venice and Constantinople only; a sky made on purpose for that country of colourists. Several large dogs, of the breed which Paolo Veronese loved and which he introduced into all his paintings as a sort of signature, further enliven this colossal composition, tumultuously calm, as is all well ordered feasting. A big cat, its four feet pressed against an amphora, rolls on the floor and voluptuously rubs its back in the corner to the right.

Besides the firmness of the drawing and the brilliancy and harmony of the colouring which years and restorations have been unable to dull, the chief merit of the vast composition lies in the fact that the glance takes it all in at once. There are not several chief lights, as often happens in paintings of extraordinary dimensions. The groups are so thoroughly linked by connected tones or lines that not one of them stands out from the rest in such a way as to kill them. Although there is a crowd, there is no confusion; every figure

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has solid ground under its feet, and one could walk without difficulty from the edge of the frame to the back of the painting.

This marvel did not cost very dear. Paolo Veronese received, from June 6, 1562, to September 8, 1563, from the monks for whom he made it, the sum which had been agreed upon, namely, three hundred and twenty-four silver ducats, besides his food and a barrel of wine, or scarcely six thousand francs of our money. What would our modern artists say to so modest a price, — they who will not part with the smallest painting for less than fifteen or twenty thousand francs, and even then claim that they are not properly treated by an ungrateful age?

Opposite the "Wedding at Cana" is hung the "Feast in the House of Simon," another huge canvas, which, without being as important as the first, is none the less a magnificent painting. Besides these two feasts Paolo Veronese painted two more: the "Feast in the House of Levi," which used to hang in the refectory of the Convent of Santi Giovanni e Paolo, and the "Feast in the House of Simon the Leper," for the refectory of San Sebastiano in Venice. These four banquets, wondrous *agapæ* of painting, were all

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brought together in Paris in the years VII and VIII of the Republic, though the art of that day does not seem to have profited greatly as regards colour from that prodigious spectacle.

The Magdalen, prostrate rather than kneeling, in an attitude of loving adoration, wipes with her opulent hair of Venetian fairness the feet of the Christ, who is seated at the corner of the table, and which she has just anointed with myrrh and cinnamon. Standing by another table, Judas seems to reproach the fair penitent with her profusion, the price of which would better be spent in alms. The Christ, with a gentle, majestic gesture, protects the humble, tender, loving woman, who obeys the impulse of her heart, from the invectives of the miserly apostle. The scene is under a circular portico, between the pillars of which rich buildings are seen in the distance. The apostles and various members of Simon's family and his guests are seated at two tables. Their air of Venetian patricians makes them look like members of the Council of Ten; for Paolo Veronese, who cared little for archæology, did not rummage in the vestiaries of ages for the costumes of his personages. He was satisfied if the stuffs were rich in colour and fell in handsome folds. If a head

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was characteristic, although it had no relation whatever to the subject, he would copy it, preferring to be human rather than historical, and being fonder of truth than of accuracy. Look at the woman standing on wooden pattens, leaning against the pillar on the left of the spectator. How easy are her motions, how free and spontaneous the drawing, how natural the touch! One may well say of her that she is drawn and painted from life, — such things are not to be invented.

"Jupiter striking down Crime," which is also in the Salon Carré, exhibits the genius of Paolo Veronese under another aspect. In this case he is no longer merely a decorative painter, displaying for the pleasure of the eye superb composition combined with the richest colouring that the magical palette of Venice ever furnished; he is the deeply learned artist, who attempts with facility the boldest foreshortening, and who draws the human body in the most unexpected ways, with a style, a beauty, and a colour which need fear no comparison. This painting, which was a ceiling, was originally placed in the Hall of the Council of Ten, in the Palace of the Doges. The allegory is self-explanatory. Jupiter, angered by the crimes committed on earth, descends from the summit of Olympus, his

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black brows bent, holding in his mighty hand flaming thunderbolts. Most noble, majestic, Homerically antique, is the figure of the god. Below him a genius, soaring on outspread wings and holding a book in which are written the decisions of eternal justice, lashes the Crimes, which hurry away in tumultuous terror. It recalls the descent of Phœbus Apollo described at the beginning of the Iliad. The Crimes are rapine, treason, luxuriousness, and fraud, punished by the Council of Ten, and Paolo Veronese has incarnated them in a most ingenious and poetic manner without indulging in ugliness. In painting especially, monsters "embellished by art" must please the eyes, and the Venetian painters never forgot that precept. Paolo Veronese executed this noble ceiling after a trip to Rome, where he became acquainted with antiquity and the works of Michael Angelo. However great an artist may be, he can but improve his style by contact with that splendid genius. Raphael himself emerged stronger from the Sistine Chapel, which had been opened to him for a moment.

The superb portrait of the young woman, whose green velvet dress, half undone, exposes her bosom, is usually called "Titian and his Mistress," or even

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more briefly, "Titian's Mistress." With one hand she raises the mass of her hair, of that red gold so dear to the ladies and the painters of Venice, and in the other holds a vial of perfume. A chemisette of a golden-white, the tone of which is almost the same as that of the amber flesh tones of the skin, concentrates the light upon her delicate and splendid bosom worthy of being modelled in Parian marble. Her head, somewhat inclined towards the shoulder, has the serenity of the antique ideal, the vigorous touch of life which is peculiar to Titian. He seems, in that lovely face, to have foreseen the type of the Venus of Milo, which was not discovered until several centuries later. Titian is the healthiest, the most robust, and the calmest of modern artists. No effort is visible in his work; he reaches beauty easily and at once, as if it were the most natural thing in the world. His figures are endowed with the health, the serene joy, the perfect balance of Greek statues, and antique paintings such as we may suppose them to have been; no feverishness, no uneasiness deforms them. They bloom quietly in the plenitude of their strength and beauty, happy to have received life from Titian's brush.

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To this beautiful woman a brown-bearded man, kept in the shadow, offers a couple of mirrors so that she may behold herself in every aspect. I would that tradition told the truth, and that this voluptuous, proud beauty had been the mistress and the inspiring type of the artist, but it seems that the poetic legend must be given up. According to the scholars, who reduce vague traditions to accurate facts, the man with the mirrors is Alphonso I, Duke of Ferrara, fourth husband of Lucrezia Borgia, whom Victor Hugo has depicted as so terrible; and the woman with the red-gold hair is Laura de' Dianti, who was first the duke's mistress, and later became his wife. Titian had painted her half nude before she became a duchess; he painted her dressed when she was raised to the rank of wife. If she is indeed Laura de' Dianti, one must approve Alphonso de Ferrara, and acknowledge the justice of the name Eustochia (happy choice) which he bestowed on his new duchess.

One is almost ashamed to write a eulogy of such a masterpiece; it seems like crass idiocy to express one's admiration for the grand, simple drawing, the colouring so warm and clear, the powerful and supple modelling, the bloom of life overspreading everything, which are

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the characteristic traits of Titian. The best that one can say is, "Look!"

The "Entombment" is a beautiful, noble, serious work, though it lacks the deep Christian melancholy called for by the subject, a melancholy that Titian expressed completely only in his last painting, representing also an "Entombment of Christ," which he executed at the age of ninety-nine, and which was completed by Palma the younger, after the great painter's death, killed by the plague when he had almost reached the century mark. Venetian painters excel in expressing joy, health, wealth, and happiness, and before Titian could dull his colouring and inspire it with the religious gloom suitable to such a lugubrious scene, the shadow of death had to fall upon him. Nevertheless, this "Entombment" is a painting of the first rank. The body of Christ supported by Joseph of Arimathea, Nicodemus, and Saint John, is about to be placed within the sepulchre. On the left Mary Magdalen sustains the Virgin, who swoons with grief in the arms of the saint. Many an anachronism may be noted in the costumes, and here and there a garment seems to have come from the wardrobe of the Doge; but what life, colour, and truth there are in the painting,

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and how handsome the auburn-haired youth in a yellow tunic striped with red, who half supports the inert body of the Christ.

If Titian lived for a century, Giorgione (Giorgio Barbarelli) died at the age of thirty-three, and his fortunate rival owes him much. A pupil of Giovanni Bellini, Titian in his early works imitated his somewhat dry manner and his Gothic artlessness. Giorgione's frescoes and paintings revealed to him the magic of colour and the breadth of modelling which sacrifices details to the general effect. It may be said in praise of Giorgione, that Titian equalled, but did not surpass him. There is in the Salon Carré a painting by this artist of genius, whose frescoes are vanishing like faint shadows on the façades of the houses of Venice. It is a "Pastoral Concert," curiously composed and amazingly intense in colour. In the centre of one of those landscapes of rich, warm tone well kept down, which Titian has recalled many a time, a young lord is playing on the lute, and another seems to listen; in the foreground a young woman, nude, seen from behind, seated upon the thick, golden-green sward, puts a flute to her lips; on the left another young woman whose sole garment is a bit of white drapery, leans on

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the edge of a sort of marble trough filled with water and fills from it a glass bottle. The two young nobles wear elegant Venetian costumes in the style of Vittore Carpaccio's. They do not seem to be in the least degree troubled by the contrast between their rich garments and the nudity of their companions. The painter, with the supreme artistic indifference which thinks of beauty alone, saw in his subject merely a happy contrast of lovely stuffs and lovely flesh, and as a matter of fact, it is nothing but that. The torso of the woman bending over the trough and the back of the flute-player are two magnificent pieces of painting. Never did fairer, warmer, richer, and more consistent colouring clothe robust, and splendid feminine forms.

Giorgione's "Pastoral Concert," a painting which has no subject and tells no story, probably does not attract the crowd much, but you may be sure that all those who seek after the secrets of colour stop before it a long time; and without carrying fetichism so far as did Sir David Wilkie with "Los Borrachos," of which he studied a square inch only each day, they sketch and copy it, and hang these reproductions on their studio walls as the surest test of colour which an artist can

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consult. One may affirm that Giorgione created the Venetian palette. Titian, Bonifazzio, Tintoretto, Paris Bordone, Palma Vecchia, Palma the younger, Paolo Veronese, — the most illustrious as well as the least known, — have all freely made use of it.

It is quite impossible to pass without stopping before a "Portrait of a Man," dressed in black, with a head-gear of the same colour; his hand rests on a stone sill, and his thin face, marked by intense thought and deep melancholy, is framed in by sombre hair as by an aureole of darkness. It is a delicate, troubling, mysterious painting, so perfect that, as the author was not known, it was attributed to Raphael as the one most worthy of putting his name to such a masterpiece. Now, as the result of investigations which appear to be conclusive, the sublime portrait has been given back to Francia; and although Francia was a great admirer of Raphael, and even addressed to him a charming sonnet of praise, his shade must be satisfied at having regained possession of this glorious work.

There are also in the same hall two precious small paintings by Francia: "The Nativity," and "The Crucified Christ." The latter is signed "Francia Aurifaber," for the painter was a goldsmith as well, and,

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with artistic coquetry easily understood, signed his goldsmith work "Francia Pictor." Besides, Francia was but a pseudonym; his real name was Francesco Raibolini. The famous Andrea del Sarto is scarcely known by his name, Andrea Vannucchi. His nick-name was given to him by his contemporaries because his father was a tailor; posterity has preserved the familiar appellation and has made it into a halo. Was he really called Andrea Vannucchi? Modern erudition doubts it. As a matter of fact, his monogram is composed of two interlaced A's instead of an A and a V as was at first believed. But what matters it? Andrea del Sarto was none the less proclaimed the unerring master, *senza errori*. Yet it is not to this fact that his glory is due. He managed to attain, among all those geniuses and talents of the days of the Renaissance, a grand, broad, simple manner, in which much naturalness and a certain charming artlessness are mingled with the finest of styles and the richest of colouring, — a merit rare indeed in Florence, where drawing was thought more important than colour. Andrea del Sarto's manner is deeply original, and his paintings are recognised at a glance. His Madonnas, his Charities, have a certain family air, and recall the features

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of Lucrezia Fede, whom he loved madly, and who was the cause of his destruction; for he spent on her the money which Francis I had given him for the purpose of purchasing works of art in Italy. But I must stay my pen. I have not now to write the troubles of that unfortunate whom Alfred de Musset has made the hero of his truthful, human, and most touching drama. Let me describe his "Holy Family," which is not the least of the ornaments of the Salon.

The Virgin, seated on the ground, on the left of the painting, presents the Child Jesus to Saint Elizabeth. The young Saint John, held back by his mother, stands and raises his hand to heaven. Two angels in an attitude of tender adoration, are behind the Virgin. The drawing of this fine composition is marked by the fullest Florentine elegance, without falling into the troubled mannerism of lines which even Michael Angelo himself has not always managed to avoid. The contours, painted in rich, warm impasto, are not too heavy or harsh, and although the group shows that Andrea del Sarto sought eurhythmy, it is not stiffened into sculptural attitudes. Curiously enough, this painter, who was so very unhappy in life, gives to the faces in his paintings an air of candid happiness

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and of artless kindness; a sort of innocent joy curls their lips; they beam with innocent serenity in the warm, rich atmosphere in which the artist has plunged them. The painter represents his dream, not his life.

There are to be met with in art marvellous idlers who, after having attained perfection, seem to disdain it as being too easy and who cease to work. They are satisfied with having given proof of their strength in a few masterpieces and having it acknowledged by others. Sebastiano del Piombo is of them. He painted some admirable pictures, and showed such talent that Michael Angelo thought, by helping him with his advice, and sometimes, it is said, with his drawings, that he might be made into a fit rival of Raphael. That is easily understood when the "Visitation" in the Louvre is looked at. Most pure, most noble, and most striking is the Virgin, veiling with her draperies the signs of advancing maternity as she proceeds towards Saint Elizabeth, the other miraculous mother, who meets Mary with admiring and tender deference. If Michael Angelo had been a colourist, this is the way he would have painted.

Let me not forget Bernardo Luini, whose paintings have often been honoured by being attributed to Leo-

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nardo da Vinci, though nothing proves that he was his immediate pupil; yet the pupils of the great masters are not always to be found in their school; admiring and passionate study often teaches as much as regular lessons. Besides, it would be a mistake to see in Luini merely a reflection of Leonardo; he has his own originality, an accent peculiar to himself, a mysterious, sweet manner, types of his own, and a special ideal, which enable him to be easily recognised through the softly graduated and deep shadows which he has borrowed from Leonardo da Vinci.

Luini has in the Salon Carré a "Salome," the daughter of Herodias, receiving in a basin the head of Saint John presented to her by the executioner, whose arm alone is seen. That hand, holding the head and issuing mysteriously from the shadow, produces a strange and sinister effect, which is made more striking still by the perfection of the execution. Salome is superbly dressed; her head, seen in three quarters, is framed in by delicately wavy hair, of which the Milanese school was so fond; she receives in her silver basin, as if it were an orange or sweets, the livid head with its convulsed eyes and its bluish lips on which still trembles the shudder of the last

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agony; but she looks vaguely before her with her limpid glance, and a delicate smile fluttering on her charming lips. How well she expresses the gentle cruelty of fatal women! She must have been the painter's mistress, for he painted her very often.

So far, I have spoken of the Italian school only, although the schools of all countries are represented in this sanctuary of art by glorious specimens. Rembrandt did indeed live in foggy Holland, but he also is a god of painting, and has a place among the most illustrious. He is a Romanticist genius in the fullest extent of the term. An alchemist of colour, a wizard of light, his work might be symbolised by the marvellous etching in which he shows us Dr. Faustus, or some other alchemist, in his dark cell, rising from his arm-chair at the sight of the dazzling microcosm which shines through the shadows in his study. Rembrandt's genius is a star emerging from the shadows. Unquestionably he does not possess the plastic beauty, the lofty ideal, and the nobility of style of the great Italians, but he has discovered a world in which he reigns as master and which he seems to have created in its entirety. He has developed an eccentric, fantastic, mysterious, grim manner peculiarly his own. If he

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does not possess beauty, he does possess character, and his faces, often ugly and sometimes repulsive, are always thoroughly human and pathetic. He cares as little as the Venetians do about historical accuracy in costume; it is in the Juden Gasse, in the bric-à-brac shops, in the cosmopolitan second-hand shops of the Rideck that he picks out the turbans, pelisses, cuirasses, morions, and queer costumes which he puts upon his personages. These are what he calls his antiques, and although he has both casts and engravings in his studio, he consults none others.

We have seen Paolo Veronese, in the "Wedding at Cana," give to a mere Jewish wedding the splendour, the sumptuousness, and the grandeur of a royal banquet; he seats as guests at this transfigured wedding the most illustrious and the most powerful characters of his day. Rembrandt, in his "Holy Family," works in precisely the opposite fashion. He takes for background a humble Dutch interior, with its walls brown in tone, its projecting mantelpiece lost in the shadow, and its narrow window, through the yellow panes of which filters a ray of light. He makes the mother bending over the child's cradle a mother, nothing more, with her bosom illumined by a side light; near

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her an old matron, and by the window a carpenter planing pieces of wood. Thus it is he understood the Virgin, Saint Anne, the Child Jesus, and Saint Joseph. He makes this scene more intimate, more human, more truthful, if you like, than it has ever been painted. Of course one may choose to see in it merely a poor carpenter's family, but the beam that lights upon the cradle of the Child Jesus shows that He is God, and that from the humble cradle shall spring the Light of the World. This painting, so contrary to the Italian genius, is the Gospel translated into the vulgar tongue for the use of the poor and the meek, whom the solemn elegance and the rhythmic attitudes of the lovely Madonnas would distract. Feeling takes the place of mysticism, and the powerful triviality of genius equals the purity of the most classical style.

The Amsterdam painter has scarcely ever painted a "Portrait of a Woman" to be compared, as regards relative beauty of type, with the one which hangs in this Salon near "Titian's Mistress," a formidable neighbourhood which in no wise diminishes its worth. It is that of a young woman of about twenty-five years, with regular though somewhat heavy features, brown eyes, thick red lips, abundant, wavy hair of a brown

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which is almost red, a quiet, engaging, gentle face. A fur-lined jacket covers her shoulders, and exposes her soft, fat neck and her swelling breasts, only half concealed by a pleated chemisette. It is impossible to imagine the incredible vigour of life which Rembrandt has put into that face, bathed in the regal gold of magic colour. The shadows on the cheeks, the lights and shadows on the neck, the golden tone of the linen, the warm, transparent brown of the fur and of the hair which seems full of sunshine, the light on the nose and brow, the amazing touch of the brush, which by a sort of dabbing reproduces the grain of the skin and the solidity of the flesh, make of this portrait an unrivalled painting, one of the masterpieces of art. Even Titian does not possess such deep power of colour and intensity of light; his amber pales somewhat by the side of this gold.

Not far off hangs the "Woman with the Dropsy," by Gerard Dow, a precious painting worth its weight in gold, a masterpiece in its way, a marvel of finish, delicacy, and cleanness. Never did careful Holland dust nature to better effect than in this painting. But patience is not genius, and in order to do it the justice it deserves, the "Woman with the Dropsy"

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should be looked at before Rembrandt's "Portrait of a Woman."

Note attentively the "Virgin" by Van Eyck, the inventor of oil painting, a process that transformed art, so to speak; the first thing that strikes one is the amazing preservation of the painting, more than four centuries old. It is perfectly intact, and seems, judging by the freshness of the tints, to have been brought but yesterday from the artist's studio. It is contrary to logic, no doubt, but the older a painting, the better does it preserve its original colouring. One would think that the progress of chemistry should have placed at the disposal of painters more lasting colours, but it is not so. Those worthy artists, themselves workmen, who ground their own colours, knew a good deal more about them than chemists, and Van Eyck's painting proves it. In a rich Gothic chamber, through the arcades at the back of which is seen a mediæval city with its infinite details, the Blessed Virgin, before whom kneels a grave personage, modestly bends her head under the golden crown starred with gems brought her by the angel. Most pure, chaste, and delicate is she; still somewhat awkward and of Gothic symmetry, but drawn with incredible

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delicacy and accuracy. As for the colouring, instead of darkening with time, it has become like an agate, and has acquired the changeless brilliancy of hard stones.

Transitions are impossible in pages containing the description of masterpieces as these happen to come along, collected in the same room, without any distinction of countries, schools, or times; so I shall pass from Van Eyck to Rubens, from one pole of art to the other. The great painter is honourably represented in the Salon Carré by his "Queen Thomyris," and his "Portrait of Helen Fourment," accompanied by her two sons. But a corner of the wall is not sufficient for him; he needs a whole gallery to display his prodigious abundance and his Titanic exaggeration.

Thomyris, Queen of the Scythians, having defeated Cyrus, causes to be plunged — humane in her cruelty — the head of the vanquished hero in a vase filled with blood, so that the head may, even though dead, indulge in its favourite drink. The young queen, in her robe of white satin, surrounded by a fierce and savage court which contrasts with her brilliant dress, bends from her throne to contemplate the spectacle, at once satisfying and revolting.

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The "Portrait of Helen Fourment" is a marvel of lightness and transparency. It has been dashed off with a touch of the brush, and is amazingly successful as an improvisation. It is a mass of rubbings penetrated by the light, of touches apparently put on haphazard, but every one of which expresses what it means better than the most minute work; of sparkling relief lights splashed exactly on the right places. What painting could come up to such a sketch?

In this work, delightful in its freshness, Rubens kept his ruddy ardour within bounds; he is golden, silvery, pearly, like satin and light.

Near the "Wedding at Cana" is Van Dyck's "Charles I" in his chivalrous and melancholy attitude, dressed in white satin, splendidly plumed, personifying the royal gentleman too weak to struggle against revolutionary times. His lace collar seems to conceal the narrow red line that marks a head predestined to the axe.

Ostade's peasants, Terburg with his handsome women and his cavaliers, Metzu with his calm interiors, maintain the reputation of the Dutch and Flemish schools; but we shall come upon them elsewhere; let it suffice to mention that they are present in this *Tribuna*.

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I have not yet spoken of the Spanish school, which, although it is not fully represented in the Louvre, has nevertheless enough there to give visitors an idea of its power, its brilliancy, and its originality. Murillo's famous "Assumption," so warmly fought over at the sale of Marshal Soult's collection, shines amid the darker canvases with all the silvery brilliancy of its celestial light. The Virgin in a white robe, a blue mantle on her shoulder, a starry crown on her head, and her feet resting on the crescent of the moon, rises light as vapour towards the divine realm where a throne awaits her. Her lovely hands are crossed on her bosom, and her eyes, filled with ecstasy, eagerly drink in the eternal light. She is about to meet in heaven, in the full splendour of His glory and seated at the right of His Father, the Son whom she had seen dying on the cross. Around the Virgin floats, in a luminous haze of azure, silver, and gold, a band of lovely cherubs, angelically beautiful, sweet as loves, playing, fluttering, and crowding around with blessed delight. Never did Daniel Seghers, the Antwerp Jesuit, paint a fresher wreath of roses around a Madonna by Rubens, for the cherubs of Murillo are of a yet fresher, lighter, and more tender tone. The flow-

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ers of Paradise surpass those of earth. Nevertheless this painting, wonderful as it is, does not come up, in my opinion, to the "Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" in the Academy of San Fernando at Madrid, nor even to the "Saint Anthony of Padua receiving the Child Jesus from the Hands of the Virgin," which is in the cathedral at Seville; but it is adorably charming, irresistibly attractive. It mingles with a feeling of the most profound Catholicity a sort of pious coquetry, of celestial mannerism, and of amorously devout grace which a devout painter of deep conviction could alone render.

Another painting by Murillo, representing the "Immaculate Conception," hangs also in the Salon Carré. Although it is not as brilliant as the painting I have just described, it nevertheless exhibits the eminent qualities of the master. It differs from the former by a mingling of idealism and realism which forms a very happy contrast. Below the vaporous group of the Virgin, and the angels holding a scroll on which are the words, "*In principio dilexisti eam*," is seen a group of five personages, half-length, contemplating the Queen of Heaven in attitudes of profound adoration. Every one of the heads is wondrously realistic, for Murillo painted men as admirably as he did angels.

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"The Adoration of the Shepherds" by José Ribera, called Spagnoletto, is in the tempered style of the master, usually more fiery, more violent, and wilder. Ribera, whose fierce genius had something of the bravo, of the executioner, and the torturer, and who delighted in the representation of martyrs given over to executioners, of old men in the last stages of decrepitude, subjects which he reproduced with dreadful truth and an unsurpassed vigour of effect and touch, was nevertheless capable of feeling and reproducing pure beauty. No further proof of this is needed than the exquisite head of the Virgin in the "Adoration of the Shepherds," which so charmingly recalls the Spanish type. Her lovely black eyes are full of light, and if she is not wholly the Mother of Heaven, she is at least the most beautiful earthly Mary the brush can produce. The Child Jesus rests in a wooden cradle filled with straw, surrounded by three shepherds and a woman in worship. They have not gold, frankincense, and myrrh like the Magi, but they offer what they possess, the tribute of their poverty, a little new-born kid. At the back an angel announces the glad tidings to shepherds watching their flocks upon the mountains. But under the voluntary gentleness, one feels self-

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mastered strength, and the colouring, though luminous and golden, is intensely vigorous.

Quite recently there came from the Portalès Gallery to the Louvre Antonelli da Messina's "Head of a Condottiere," a marvel, a masterpiece, a miracle of painting. Antonelli da Messina, who did not hesitate to commit a crime in order to secure the secret of painting in oils, was not the less a great artist because he was a scoundrel. He has imparted to that harsh and fierce face such a feeling of life, strength, and reality that one seems to see the man himself, the physical and the moral man. It is portraiture absolutely; the proudest style is wondrously united to the most accurate truth. The drawing reproduces the forms with amazing precision, and an unchanging colour like that of mosaics is spread over a modelling so fine and so vigorous as to be unrivalled. In this painting, he attained his aim at his very first attempt. Men have done differently since, but not better. Holbein's admirable "Portrait of Erasmus," which hangs not far from that of Antonelli da Messina, looks like a thin silhouette when compared with this robust painting, even though it is treated so carefully.

Let me mention also Holbein's "Portrait of Anne

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of Cleves," remarkable for its symmetrical attitude, the red and gold costume, the head, minutely and charmingly modelled, the delicate, aristocratically white hands.

But is there not in this *Tribuna* of art a single painting of the old French school? Have we produced nothing that can stand being placed by these great masters of Italy, Flanders, and Spain? Be reassured; here is Poussin with his "Landscape" and "Diogenes," in his noble, proud style which makes of this picture a type of classical landscape-painting; Claude Lorraine and his colouring interpenetrated with light; the tender Le Sueur and his "Vision of Saint Bernard," as graceful as a Raphael; Jouvenet and his great "Descent from the Cross," which recalls the beautifully balanced compositions which do honour to Daniele da Volterra; Philippe de Champagne, so austerely Jansenist in his painting of "Christ" stretched on his white shroud, and so accurate a portrait painter in his "Cardinal de Richelieu." Nor let me forget Hyacinthe Rigaud, the brilliant, warm colourist, whose portraits are not out of place among those of Titian, Van Dyck, and Velasquez.

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IV

THE HALL OF THE EARLY MASTERS

ON the right, at the beginning of the gallery which runs by the water-side and joins the Tuileries, there is an oblong hall (formerly called *Salle des Sept Mètres* and now *des Primitifs*) not less rich in wonderful paintings than the Salon Carré. In the very first rank shine four pictures by Leonardo da Vinci: a Holy Family, known as "la Vierge aux Rochers," "Saint John the Baptist," the "Belle Ferronnière," and "Bacchus."

The "Holy Family" has been made popular through engravings. It is a composition breathing the strange, mysterious grace of the master. In a weird landscape forming a sort of grotto, bristling with stalactites and sharp rocks, the Virgin presents the little Saint John to the Child Jesus, who blesses him with upraised finger. An angel with lovely proud mien, a celestial her-

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maphrodite, half maiden, half youth, but superior to both in its ideal beauty, accompanies and supports the Child Jesus, with a mixture of respect and protection, like a page of noble family watching over a king's child. Its hair, with innumerable wavy curls, frames in a delicate face of aristocratic distinction. This angel unquestionably occupies a very high place in the celestial hierarchy; he must be a Throne, a Dominion, or a Principality at the very least. The Child Jesus, drawn up on himself in a pose full of skilful foreshortening, is of marvellous plumpness and modelling. The Virgin is of the charming Lombard type, in which, under innocent modesty, shows the somewhat satirical playfulness which Vinci excels in expressing. The colouring of this masterly painting has darkened in the shadows, but it has lost nothing of its harmony. Perhaps even it might be less ideally poetic, had it retained its original freshness and the tones of life.

Doubts have been expressed about this painting. Certain critics insist that it is only a composition by Leonardo da Vinci painted by another hand, or even no more than a copy of a similar painting executed for the Chapel of the Conception in the Franciscan Church

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at Milan; but no one save Vinci could have drawn those firm, clean contours, could have managed that modelling with its skilful degradation which imparts the roundness of sculpture to the bodies with all the grain of the skin, or rendered his favourite types in so masterly and so delicate a fashion.

"Saint John the Baptist" is an enigmatic painting, in which it is very difficult to recognise the fierce ascete, who, his loins girded with the skin of a wild beast, lived in the desert and fed on locusts. The figure, emerging from the deep shadow, and pointing to heaven with one hand while in the other it holds a reed cross, is assuredly not a man. The arm, bent back over the body, conceals the bosom, it is true, but it is so very round, delicate, and white that it can scarce belong to a member of the sterner sex. As for the head, slightly inclined towards the left, its features strangely recall those of the "Gioconda." They are marked by a voluptuous and sardonic expression, a troubling slyness, a sphinx-like imperturbability, which no one has expressed like da Vinci. The swelling of the pectoral muscles, due to the pressure of the arm on the flesh, simulates rather ambiguously the nascent roundness of the female bosom, while the

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lamb-skin conceals the rest. The hair is long and curly. It is not impossible that Leonardo da Vinci represented under this disguise, of which many other examples can be found, the type of beauty which preoccupied him, and inspired him with at least artistic love. Saint John, in that case, would be, with a certain disguise in order to blind the vulgar, another portrait of Mona Lisa, more ideal, mysterious, and strange even than the other, — a portrait free from literal resemblance and exhibiting the soul through the veil of the body.

On the contrary, spite of his garland of vine leaves and his thyrsus, "Bacchus," seated in the midst of a pastoral landscape, one leg crossed on the other, seems to have been originally a Saint John the Baptist; but doubtless his pagan god's beauty, the smile on his sinuous lips, the secret joy which illumines his mocking eyes, compelled the taking from his profane hand the humble cross of reeds. In this painting Leonardo cannot have employed the famous black which he invented, and which has deepened and darkened the shadows in his paintings. The colouring is rich, radiant, tender as gold under the red smoke of time. The "Bacchus" is of the size called kit-cat, but it is

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painted in such a grand, proud, divine style that, in its small frame, it seems more than life-size.

The portrait known as the "Belle Ferronnière" does not represent, as is commonly supposed, the mistress of Francis I, but Lucrezia Crevelli, who was loved by Lodovico Sforza. The gem suspended from a black silk tress that adorns her brow, and which is even to-day called a *ferronnière*, no doubt caused that name to be given to the painting. However it may be, the head is admirable, astonishingly firm in drawing and modelling, and set off by a rich dress of orange-red velvet edged with gold braid and cut square on the bosom.

Andrea Mantegna, the pupil of Squarcione, who had brought back from Greece casts and drawings of sculptures, became, when quite young, deeply attached to antiquity, and made successful efforts to attain the pure, noble taste characteristic of the works of the ancients, then practically unknown in Italy. Unquestionably Mantegna never managed to get entirely rid of Gothic stiffness and dryness, but his style is already superior, and shows that a new element has been introduced into art. He has elegance and a feeling for beauty, with a naïve eccentricity of invention which is but an additional charm. The "Triumph of Julius

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Cæsar," a series of distemper paintings on canvas now at Hampstead Court in England, exhibit a fertility of imagination, an elevation of style and an understanding of movement of which but few examples then existed. The first beams of the Renaissance fell upon Mantegna. After the long Byzantine and Gothic night, beauty returned to delight an amazed world.

This is the feeling aroused by the "Parnassus," an allegorical composition by Mantegna, in the Louvre. The artist is plainly delighted with his own imagination, as novel to him as to others. As he works, he makes discoveries, surprises himself; he exhibits his newly acquired knowledge, of which he is very proud. It is a happy moment for art, with a charm of puberty that passes all too soon. In this strange and seductive painting, Mantegna has turned to account all his knowledge of mythology. First comes Apollo, with the sacred chorus of the Muses dancing to the strains of his lyre; then Mercury, with his caduceus, leaning on a winged Pegasus covered with gems; in the middle distance Helicon, from which flows Hippocrene, the irresistible source of beautiful verse, and on a rock pierced in the shape of an arch, Venus in her fair nudity by the side of Mars in armour; on one side

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Cupid shooting arrows; on the other, in his den, Vulcan, furiously threatening the lovers. What was the idea which the artist concealed in this strange composition? I do not know, and I shall not strive to ascertain it. I am content to admire the elegance of the Muses, the nobility of their pose, the ingenious draping of their garments, the sculptural beauty of the group formed by Mars and Venus, the pose of Mercury, the flow of draperies, the attention paid to detail; and this exhibition of mythology in the very depths of the Middle Ages, which strikes one as might Helen in Faust's feudal palace, with her antique nudity and her floating draperies, the lightness of which causes her some slight embarrassment.

"Wisdom Triumphant over Vice," represents Minerva, preceded by Diana as the incarnation of chastity, and Philosophy armed with a torch, driving away the deformed and bestial horde of vices, — Lust, with its goat's hoofs, Inertia and Idleness in their slough, Fraud, Malice, Drunkenness, and Ignorance, carried by Ingratitude and Avarice. In the heavens soar the Virtues which are to take the place on the purified earth of the monsters that Wisdom has driven away. Since those days allegory has been overdone, but at

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that time it was a novelty, and the artist found in it an opportunity of contrasting types of ugliness and of beauty. In this painting Mantegna has given proof of fertility of invention, and exhibits an abundance of motives which clever painters even now turn to account. Certain figures or groups admired in modern paintings much lauded at the Salon, could be traced back without much difficulty to the works of the old master.

It is not customary to see the gentle Madonna surrounded by knights armed from top to toe, but this time it is the "Virgin of Victory" that Mantegna desired to represent. She is seated on a throne of precious marbles enriched with golden *bassi-relievi*, within a niche of garlands of verdure forming a dome, mingled with flowers, fruits, corals, pearls, and gems. The archangel Saint Michael and Saint George the good knight, wearing magnificent armour, support her mantle; Saint Longinus in a red helmet, and Saint Andrew, patron of Mantua, stand near the throne; Saint John is by Saint Elizabeth, who kneels, a coral chaplet in her hand; and on the steps of the throne the Marquis of Mantua, Giovanni Francesco Gonzaga, clad in steel from neck to heels, the collar of the Order

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of Saint Maurice around his neck, does homage to the Virgin, who extends over him her protecting hand, and to the Divine Child, who blesses him. This was excessive gratitude indeed for the defeat of Formia, where the Marquis's forty thousand Italians had been defeated by the nine thousand Frenchmen of Charles VIII; but no matter, Mantegna's painting is a masterpiece. It is a page of chivalry in a devotional picture. The holy warriors, the lovely armour, the abundance of gems and flowers, give devotion an unusual aspect of pride and triumph, and renovate a somewhat trite subject.

We come across Raphael, too, in this hall. His "Portrait of Joanna of Aragon" is one of those works which, besides their artistic merit, have the attraction of fascination. It is impossible for any one who has seen it ever to forget it. Joanna of Aragon remains in one's memory as one of the types of feminine perfection, dreamed of but which it is hopeless to expect to meet in this life. It is said that the head alone was painted by Raphael, and that the remainder of the painting is the work of Giulio Romano from the master's cartoons; but time has passed its harmonising hand over the whole, and it is very difficult to-day

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to distinguish the master's work from the disciple's. Giulio Romano himself is a painter of the first order, and when, in his pupil's devotion, he absorbs himself in Raphael's personality, you may be sure that he does not spoil it.

The Princess is seen in three-quarters. She wears a hood of carnation-coloured velvet embroidered with gems, a gown of the same stuff and the same colour. One hand rests on her lap; with the other she draws aside the fur that covers her shoulders. The background is a hall of rich architecture opening upon gardens. The head, framed in by long, wavy, puffing fair hair, is marked by aristocratic delicacy and patrician elegance; she is a princely beauty in the widest sense of the word, and imagination would place by her a royal coat of arms, even did we not know that it is Joanna of Aragon, daughter of Ferdinand of Aragon, Duke of Montalto, and granddaughter of Ferdinand I, Prince of Naples, married to Prince Ascanio Colonna, Constable of Naples. Happy Ascanio, indeed, to have possessed the original of such a copy! The hands, which are extremely high-bred, are the loveliest possible, and the warmth of the velvet further augments their fairness.

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A word about the "Portrait" by Balthazar Castiglione, the painter of "The Courtier "(Il Cortegiano), who in his day had a great deal of success, and who united in himself all the qualities which, in his day, went to make up an accomplished gentleman. It is a beautiful, manly, intelligent head, with a beard and moustaches, the brown tone of which harmonises with the sober black dress slashed with gray.

Who has not stopped before this "Head of a Young Man," with its fair hair, its black toque, the elbow leaning upon a stone sill, and the cheek supported by the hand, while the gaze seems to follow in its nonchalant reverie some delightful dream? It is the ideal of prettiness, and never did young girl imagine more suave features for the fair unknown whom she awaits. Tradition holds that this is a portrait of Raphael painted by himself in early youth, when he still possessed a face like that of an angel recently come to earth; but it is difficult to accept the pleasant legend. In this delightful portrait the third manner of the painter is plain. He must have painted it towards the end of his life; but by way of compromise it may be supposed that it is a remembrance of his youth, and that the artist, having reached the topmost summit of glory, enjoyed

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representing himself such as he was when he entered upon life.

His "Saint Margaret" tramples under her lovely feet a dragon that writhes and twists in coils no less tortuous than those of Racine's monster, and that opens, in one corner of the painting, a terrific mouth, a perfect abyss of teeth, whence issue smoke and flames. Most sweet, pure, and virginal are the features of the saint, amazed at her power over monsters, and holding like a flower of the fields the palm of her martyrdom.

I shall call, as the catalogue does, "Portrait of Avalos, Marquis of Guast," the amazing painting by Titian, the meaning of which is still unsolved, in spite of the ingenious guesses of the commentators. What is absolutely clear in this masterpiece is its immortal beauty. A young woman, seated, holds on her knees a crystal ball. Never was the bloom of life represented with more adorable power. The light spreads broad and rich, filled with gold, sunshine, and amber, on that flesh with its marble grain. The face expresses the enjoyment of perfect beauty, the calm of absolute harmony. Near the splendid creature a man with imposing, serious face, his head bare, wearing an

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armour the tawny tones of which shimmer in the shadow, stands and puts quietly one hand on her bosom, enclosing her breast in his palm. Curiously enough, the young woman does not seem to be troubled by this taking possession of her beauty, and looks at a little Cupid which holds out to her a bundle of arrows. Another young woman, or rather a nymph, seen in profile and crowned with myrtle, seems to do homage to the Marquis's mistress; and farther off another figure, of which the head thrown back and the hands upraised are alone seen, holds up a basket of flowers.

A letter from the Marquis to Pietro Aretino states his wish to have Titian paint his own portrait as Mars, that of his wife as Venus, and that of his son as Cupid. Now is the painting we are looking at the realisation of that artistic fancy? It strikes me that the composition is very gallant and voluptuous for a family picture.

Now look at the "Portrait of Francis I" in a costume slashed with carnation-red and white, and its profile with its bold, sarcastic, sensual expression. This is indeed the knightly King, the Protector of letters, the hero who on the night of Marignan had but the fragments of three great swords. Was it painted from

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life? That is scarcely possible if dates are taken into account. It is difficult to bring together in Italy Titian and Francis I at the age suggested by the portrait. It may be supposed with some likelihood that it was painted from some of the medals which the Renaissance artists knew how to model so well; for such an artist as Titian, that would suffice for the production of a work full of life, colour, and resemblance. Francis I lives forever in the imagination of people under the aspect which the great Venetian artist has given him. He lives through this canvas.

I cannot describe at length two or three portraits of men by Titian, representing grave personages dressed in black, men of great families, magnificos of Venice, strongly drawn, beautifully painted, and of unapproachable pride of port. Titian, with Velasquez, is the greatest portrait painter in the world.

Let me speak of the "Holy Family," known under the name of "Vierge au lapin." Happy the paintings which have familiar and popular names repeated by every one; and yet works of great merit have not been so fortunate. The Virgin, seated on the ground, places her hand on a white rabbit which the Child Jesus, borne by Saint John, seems to long for with

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childish impatience. The white spot in the centre of the painting is the keynote that settles the values of the colouring, intensely rich and of wondrous luminousness and warmth. In the middle distance Saint Joseph, watching a flock, caresses a black ewe. The background, formed of trees, meadows, and hills, proves what a wonderful landscape-painter Titian was, and how he managed to make the sky, the grass, and the water subordinate to the figures without diminishing their own value; the background of his paintings alone, without any figures, would have sufficed to win him fame.

In the "Pilgrims at Emmaüs," Titian, indulging in the Venetian liberty of anachronism, which did not hesitate to introduce modern personages amid scenes of anterior times, has placed, says tradition, on the right of the Saviour, in the garments of a pilgrim, the Emperor Charles V, and on the left, in a similar disguise, Cardinal Ximenes. The page who brings a dish to the table is said to be Philip II, King of Spain. Near the Christ, who is blessing the bread, a servant, bare-armed, his thumbs stuck in his belt, awaits the orders of the guests. Under the table, covered with a cloth at least as beautiful as the cloth in Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper," a cat and a dog are playing familiarly. The

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whole painting is superb, luminous, full of strength and health, light, sunshine, and robust life. Such qualities make one easily forgive a few errors in costume and local colour.

Palma Vecchio has in this hall a superb painting long attributed to Titian, which is not surprising considering the warmth, luminousness, broad colouring, and fine tone of the painting. This superb composition, which is an *ex-voto*, for it contains the portrait of the giver kneeling behind the Virgin, is called "The Annunciation to the Shepherds." Mary, seated, presents the Child Jesus, in a cradle of plaited strips of bark, to a young shepherd, who, his hands crossed on his breast, bends before the divine Child in an attitude of adoration. A little farther away two other shepherds contemplate with surprise two angels sweeping through the sombre blue of air. Saint Joseph, standing behind the Virgin, completes the composition. The beauty of the heads, the pose of the figures, the softness of the drapery, the brilliancy of the colouring, make of this "Annunciation to the Shepherds" one of the finest works of the Venetian school.

Andrea del Sarto's "Charity" shows incomparably radiant on these walls hung with masterpieces. Seated

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on a mound, a young woman of robust and gentle attitude, smiling like Love, prodigal like Fecundity, shelters two children within her hospitable lap; one of her breasts, swollen with milk, emerges from her half-opened dress; at her feet on a fold of her drapery sleeps a young boy with the carelessness of a being that knows it is protected by the vigilant eyes of love. Charity wears gay colours, pale rose and turquoise blue, for Charity, to the unfortunate, is Hope. The whole group beams with tranquil majesty. Never did kindness have more charming features or more lovely grace, and yet the painter has managed to impart an indefinable expression of indifference to the face of this Virtue; for Charity is not Maternity; she has not borne within her womb the children she suckles; all the unfortunate are her children. The dead, clear tone of this painting recalls the tone of frescoes, the grandeur of which it possesses. On a paper cast on the ground in a corner of the painting runs the painter's signature: "*Andreas Sartus Florentinus me pinxit, M.D.X.V.IIV.*"

I have shown you Mantegna under his mythological and naïve aspect; he succeeded no less well in religious paintings. His "Christ Crucified between the

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Two Thieves" is a pathetic composition, in no wise impaired by a certain ingenious strangeness of arrangement and attitude which is the mark of the master. Placed between the good and the wicked thieves, one of whom grimaces convulsively while the other appears celestially happy, Christ is dying on a cross as high as the gibbet on which Haman was hanged. The Roman soldiers are casting lots for the Just One's tunic; others on horseback are watching the execution; Saint John stands at the foot of the Cross in an attitude of despair; farther away the Virgin swoons amid the Holy Women. In the foreground, in a depression, is a half-length figure, helmeted and bearing a lance, which is claimed to be the painter's portrait. The group stands out against a background of rocks with curious outlines, through which winds the road leading to a fantastically Eastern Jerusalem. This painting, in distemper, like those of the early masters, came from the church of San Zeno in Venice. While Mantegna still follows tradition in the figures of Christ and the holy personages, his Roman soldiers already exhibit the feeling for antiquity. This remarkable painting is at once the evening and the dawn; the Middle Ages are closing, the Renaissance is beginning.

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Beltraffio was a gentleman of Milan, and a pupil of Leonardo da Vinci, who painted only when he chose, and whose works are very rare. The "Madonna of the Casio Family" which the Louvre owns, possesses, besides its qualities as a painting, the merit of being undoubtedly authentic, for Beltraffio's pictures have often been attributed to better-known artists. What a happy time it was which possessed such able amateurs! Beltraffio's Madonna has a peculiar character. The head is of the Lombard type; a small veil of black gauze half conceals the brow, and the mysterious depth of the modelling makes it almost the cousin of Mona Lisa. She holds in her lap the Child Jesus, blessing the two givers of the painting, one of whom, presented by Saint John the Baptist, is Girolamo Casio (or de Casio), the father of Giacomo, who is kneeling on the right, his biretta in his hand, and wearing a crown of laurel in virtue of being a poet. Near him is a nude Saint Sebastian tied to a stake, pierced with arrows, and beautiful as Apollo. Behind the figures extends a bluish landscape in which rises a slender tree with dull, scanty foliage. In the heavens soars on outspread wings an angel playing on the mandolin, which tradition attributes to Leonardo

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da Vinci. I am of opinion that tradition is wrong. If the master had touched up any part of his pupil's painting, it would be rather the Virgin's head. However it may be, the work is of the first rank and, according to Vasari, the most perfect that Beltraffio ever produced; for to the exquisite modelling of the Milanese school is allied colouring worthy of Venice.

A writer who has to speak of the Italian school finds it almost impossible to vary his expressions. The theme is nearly always the same,— the Madonna, the Child Jesus, and a few saints that scarcely vary. All that marks the difference between one painting and another — the time, the style, the drawing, the colour, the composition, the touch, the originality peculiar to the artist — can be but faintly brought out in a written description, especially a brief one, that has to indicate merely the chief features, without entering into minute detail which alone is characteristic. So I am now in the presence of a Cima da Conegliano. Assuredly a very remarkable painting, it is again a "Madonna with the Child Jesus," enthroned under a baldacchino and accompanied by a Saint John draped in green and a Magdalen bearing a vase of perfume. How am I, with

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words alone, to convey the feeling that this Madonna does not in the least resemble Frari's Madonna? She is more artless, less soft, and somewhat awkward, thanks to the least trace of Gothic unskilfulness; but after all, she is charming and of superb colouring. Behind her, at the foot of a terrace with a balustrade, stretches out a strange landscape representing the country around Conegliano, the native place of the painter, with rocks pierced with arches, and a river lined with buildings which laves the walls of a fortress.

In the painting by Francesco Bianchi, called *il Frari*, whose life is little known, great artist though he is, is found the same symmetrical arrangement as in Cima da Conegliano's, but the feeling is entirely different. The Virgin, seated on a richly ornamented throne, holds the Child Jesus in her arms. On the steps of the throne two angels are playing on the viola and mandora. To the left of the spectator, Saint Benedict, in richly embroidered vestments, holds a book in one hand and his crozier in the other; on the right, Saint Quentin, wearing his armour, rests his hand on his sword in an elegantly chivalrous attitude. The saint's head is bare. It is a juvenile, proud head,

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and the paladin shows in him more than the saint. Saint Benedict, too, has a fairly imperious look, and the Madonna herself has a certain somewhat haughty grace. Slender columns in the Renaissance style support arches, on which climb a few tendrils of foliage, and form the background of the picture.

Paolo Veronese does not need a vast canvas to prove his greatness. His "Christ Crucified between the Two Thieves" contains all the qualities of monumental painting. The composition, through a caprice of the artist, who desired to avoid commonplace symmetry, is wholly relegated to the left of the painting. The Christ, realising the words of Vida, *ponens caput expiravit*, has bowed his head upon his breast and gives up the ghost between the crosses of the two thieves, seen like himself in perspective and in profile. At the foot mourns the group of the Holy Women, and John, the beloved disciple, laments the death of his Master. On the right, one of the executioners, seen from behind, places his hand upon a horse's neck, and Jerusalem shows its distant sky-line under the stormy heavens. Paolo Veronese has introduced into this painting all the splendour of his palette, although in more sombre tones.

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Under a dais of gold flowered with black, the Blessed Virgin holds the Child Jesus standing on her knees, noble and simple like a great lady of Venice. Saint Catharine of Alexandria presents Saint Benedict to the divine *bambino*, and Saint George, the good knight, wearing a rich armour and lance in hand, is present as a guard of honour. Most beautiful, robust, and proud is that warrior's figure, which would be as much in its place in a tourney as in the Golden Legend.

A marvellous painting indeed is Giorgione's "Holy Family." Still, of course, the inevitable characters in these mystic paintings, the Madonna, the Child Jesus, Saint Sebastian pierced with arrows, and Saint Catharine, and on the other side the giver who ordered the *ex-voto* for his chapel or for his parish church; but how rich, intense, and warm is the colouring! What vigour of life, what a robust, frank character in the painting! How regrettable it is that that painter of genius should have died at the age of thirty-three, even younger than Raphael, leaving numerous works now forgotten or for the most part lost.

Let me also mention a "Holy Family" by Titian, superb in colouring; another by Lorenzo di Credi, in

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which are noticeable, near the Virgin and the Child Jesus, Saint Julian Hospitaller in red tights and low boots, and Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, wearing his pontifical vestments and absorbed in the perusal of the sacred book. It is a very finished picture, perfectly preserved.

In Bernardo Luini's "Sleep of Jesus," the Virgin supports in her arms, with every maternal precaution to avoid waking him, her divine Son, whom she makes ready to place on a bed prepared by the angels, one of whom holds a white cloth and the other a veil, while a third unrolls a scroll. The expression of the Madonna's face is of the most tender gentleness.

Fra Bartolommeo, the painter monk, has in this hall a painting of great importance and of the highest beauty. On a throne placed in a sort of hemicycle, the baldacchino of which is formed by a flying drapery supported by three angels, is seated the Virgin who presides at the mystic marriage of the infant Jesus and Saint Catharine, who, kneeling with her back to the spectator, receives from the little divine hand the ring of betrothal. This allegorical ceremony is witnessed by Saint Bartholomew, Saint Vincent, and other male and female saints holding palms. Between the saints

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on the right of the Virgin, and concealed in the background, are seen two monks embracing with every mark of the liveliest Christian sympathy. They are Saint Francis and Saint Dominic. The religious painter wrote upon one of the steps of the throne at the feet of the Virgin, in order that the work of his hands should profit his soul, this humble legend: "*Orate pro pictore M. D. X. I.*," and lower down, "*Bartholome flor. or. Præ.*" That is, Bartolommeo of Florence, of the Order of Preachers. His figures are noble and pure, his draperies broad and full, his colour is laid on in large masses; and if he received advice from his friend Raphael, he may well have given advice also.

Let us glance at Giulio Romano's "Triumph of Titus and Vespasian." The conqueror advances drawn by four piebald horses, and surrounded by groups of figures which seem, thanks to their genuinely antique style, coloured *bassi-relievi*, and which are indeed every one imitated from the carvings on the arch of Titus. Victory crowns the triumphant conqueror. Soldiers, their brows bound with laurel, and bearing vases and the seven-branched candlestick, the spoils of the Temple, accompany the car, two equer-

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ries holding the horses. A woman's head dragged by the hair symbolises Judæa conquered.

A curious painting by Vittore Carpaccio attracts by its eccentricity as much as by its merit. It represents Saint Stephen preaching in Jerusalem. The anachronisms in costume and architecture might lead to the belief that the scene occurs in Turkish Constantinople some time after the conquest by Mahomet II. The saint, whose face denotes extreme youth, preaches standing upon a pedestal which bears the medallion of a Roman emperor. A great number of characters dressed in Eastern costumes such as might be seen in those days on the Piazza San Marco in Venice — for Venice had once constant intercourse with the East — are listening with varying emotions to the sermon of the saint, who was to be the first martyr. In the background buildings in the style of those which at that period must have lined the square of the Atmeïdan, and which Gentile Bellini's paintings may give some idea of, show their white profiles against the mountainous horizon. To the delicate and simple quality of the drawing is joined the beauty of colouring which marks Venetian painters, even before the Renaissance.

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I must now, though I am far from having said all I have wished, leave the Hall of the Seven Metres, and enter what is called the Great Gallery, a long apartment lighted from above, which extends, parallel with the Seine, as far as the Pavilion of Flora.

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V

THE GREAT GALLERY

THE first part of the Great Gallery is reserved to the Early Masters of the Italian school. Here are seen the origins of art, and its earliest efforts after the three or four centuries of profound barbarism which followed upon the fall of the Roman Empire, a time during which the notion of beauty seems to have been entirely lost. First comes Cimabue, with his "Virgin with the Angels," a painting which resembles a Russian *eikon* and reproduces the Byzantine form, apparently at least, for the heads set within their thick golden haloes already aspire to life, and under the symmetrical, stiff folds of the draperies is outlined the human form about to break forth from its heavy chrysalis. The Virgin, with great, wide-open eyes, like the Greek Mother of God, dressed like an empress, seated on a throne, holds in her lap a somewhat wan Child Jesus in the act of blessing. Angels with golden haloes, superimposed regularly one

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over another, surround the throne, soaring in the gilded atmosphere of the painting. There are three of them on either side. A border of twenty-six medallions, representing apostles and blessed, surrounds the painting. It is certainly strangely barbaric and austere, but not without grandeur; and this sort of picturing with its raised work in gold, often produces a deeper religious effect than finished and perfect paintings. Cimabue enjoys the glory of having been sung by Dante, and of having been the master of Giotto, who from a sheep-herd became a painter, sculptor, and architect, and renewed art.

Giotto's "Saint Francis of Assisi Receiving the Stigmata" is already freer, more living, more human art than Cimabue's "Madonna." Having withdrawn to Mount della Vernia, two years before his death, Saint Francis of Assisi, in a hallucination produced by forty days' fasting, saw in an ecstasy a cherub with six wings, two outspread like the arms of a cross, two with which it flew, and two others folded over its body. From the hands, feet, and side of this cherub, which represented Christ, streamed rays that imprinted on Saint Francis of Assisi the divine stigmata of the Saviour's wounds, — real stigmata that did not disap-

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pear with the vision. There is as yet no sky in this painting, and the landscape stands out against a background of diapered gold, but it is still a very bold piece of work considering the times; nature now enters into art. The sward, the rocks, the trees, the mountains, the white cells of the hermits are shown and rendered with an artless feeling for truth. The saint is ascetically thin, with an expression of fervour and ecstasy such as the subject calls for. His attitude presents contrasting lines; it has broken through the outlines — as rigid as the leaden tracery which imprisons the figures in stained-glass windows — that hold captive, as it were, the figures in paintings of that period. Soon Cimabue's pupil freed himself from the Gothic constraint, and the frescoes still to be seen by him in the church of the Madonna dell' Arena at Padua testify to very great progress. Azure now shows in the heavens, the gold disappears, and its barbaric richness is replaced by beauty; the composition is more supple, better combined, and is distributed on several planes; expression and style arise simultaneously under his brush, which no difficulty now stays. With Giotto opens the new era, and Italy becomes the sovereign mistress of Art.

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In the lower portion of the picture are painted three compositions relating to the life of the saint: "The Vision of Pope Innocent III," advised by Saint Peter to favour the Order of the Minorites founded by Saint Francis; "Pope Innocent III, giving to Saint Francis (accompanied by his twelve companions) the Dress and Statutes of the Order;" and finally, "Saint Francis and the Birds." Every one knows that the saint, of a most loving disposition, lived in such intimate communion with nature that he understood the speech of animals, and that they replied to him. He called the swallows "sisters;" the birds listened to his sermons, and sang Mass with him, singing and keeping silence as he willed.

Fra Beato Angelico's "Coronation of the Virgin" seems to have been painted by an angel rather than by a man. Time has not dulled the ideal bloom of this painting, which is as delicate as a missal miniature, and the tints of which are borrowed from the whiteness of the lily, the roses of dawn, the azure of the sky, and the gold of the stars. No muddy tints of earth dull these seraphic forms created out of luminous vapour. On a throne with marble steps, the different colours of which are symbolical, Christ, seated, holds a

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richly wrought crown, which he is about to place on the brow of His divine Mother kneeling before Him, her head modestly bowed and her hands crossed on her bosom. Around the throne presses a chorus of angels playing on trumpets, theorbs, angelicas, and viols. A light flame burns above their heads and their great wings flutter with joy at this glorious coronation, which makes the humble servant of the Lord Queen of Heaven. On the right an angel kneels in prayer. In the lower portion of the picture, their glances turned towards heaven, the multitude of the blessed, distributed into two groups, worships and contemplates. On the one hand, Moses, Saint John the Baptist, bishops, founders of orders, designated by emblems and for the sake of clearness bearing their names inscribed around their haloes or on the embroidery of their vestments. Saint Dominic holds a branch of lilies and a book; the cloak of Saint Thomas Aquinas is clasped by a sun; white-bearded Charlemagne is recognisable by the *fleurs de lys* on his crown; near Saint Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, are lying three golden balls, symbolical of the three purses which he gave to a poor nobleman to enable him to portion his three daughters, whose beauty exposed them to temptation.

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On the other side stand King David, the apostles, martyrs, Saint Peter the Dominican with his wounded head, Saint Lawrence holding his gridiron, Saint Stephen with a palm in his hand, Saint George armed cap-à-pie; then in the foreground the lovely group of the female saints, with their celestial graces: the Magdalen, kneeling, offers a vase of ointment; Saint Cecilia is crowned with roses; Saint Clare beams through her veil studded with golden crosses and stars; Saint Catharine of Alexandria leans on the wheel, the instrument of her execution, calm and peaceful as if it were a spinning-wheel; Saint Agnes holds in her arms a little white lamb, the emblem of innocence. Fra Beato Angelico invented for these young saints a virginal, immaterial, celestial beauty of which no earthly type exists; they are souls made visible, rather than bodies, — forms of thought, arrayed in chaste white, rose, blue, starred, embroidered draperies, such as must be worn by the blessed who enjoy the eternal day of paradise. If there are any pictures in heaven, they must resemble those of Fra Angelico.

Ghirlandajo's "Christ bearing His Cross," enjoys the distinction of suggesting in its composition the first thought of Raphael's "Lo Spasimo di Sicilia." Christ,

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bowed under the cross of shame, walks peacefully along the way of sorrows. Soldiers head the procession, and a curiously dressed negro walks in front of the Saviour, who is helped to bear His cross by Saint Simon of Cyrene; the Holy Women follow, and in a corner of the painting, Saint Veronica, kneeling, displays upon a cloth the miraculous imprint of the Saviour's face. This picture is by Benedetto Ghirlandajo; two other painters, Domenico and Ridolfo, who do not belong to the same family, bear the same name.

A strange painting indeed is Benozzo Gozzoli's "Triumph of Saint Thomas Aquinas." Gozzoli painted in fresco on a long wall of the Campo Santo at Pisa twenty-four incidents drawn from the Old Testament, which may be admired, faded but still beautiful, under the cloister with its slender columns. This curious composition is divided into three parts. In the upper one is seen Christ accompanied by Saint Paul with his sword, and Moses with the Tables of the Law. The four Evangelists appear to be writing under divine inspiration, and Christ, satisfied, utters these words written on a scroll: "*Bene scripsisti de me, Thomma.*" In the middle portion Saint Thomas is enthroned in the centre of a luminous sphere, with

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open books on his knees, Aristotle and Plato standing by him. Under his feet lies William de Saint Amour, the opponent of the mendicant orders, who has fallen, overwhelmed by the thunderbolts of Saint Thomas Aquinas. At the foot of the painting, Alexander IV, surrounded by his *camerieri* and his cardinals, presides over the Council of Agnani, in which was discussed the great question of the mendicant orders, attacked by William de Saint Amour, and defended by Saint Thomas Aquinas. In the multitude are to be seen Saint Bonaventura, Albert the Great, Humbert de Romans, General of the Dominicans, and the doctors Peter and John, deputed to the Pope by Louis IX.

Thus has Benozzo represented the apotheosis of Saint Thomas Aquinas, the Angel of the Schools, the Silent Ox who, according to Albert the Great, his professor, was later to utter in doctrine so formidable a bellow that the whole world would hear it.

The "Nativity" by Filippo Lippi, is a painting in which the artist's originality breaks through the Gothic formula of composition, and adds to the sacred subject a direct study of nature. The Child Jesus is on the ground between the Virgin and Saint Joseph kneeling in worship. Is the thoroughly individual face of the

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Virgin a portrait of Lucrezia Buti, a pupil in the convent for which Lippi painted the "Nativity," and whom he ran off with? It is quite probable, for this picture is undoubtedly the one ordered for their high altar by the nuns of Saint Margaret. Whether it be a portrait or not, the head is delicate, charming, and full of exquisite feeling. Gray-bearded Saint Joseph, with his look of a poor man, is painted in a thoroughly realistic manner, as one would say to-day. He has near him his staff and his travelling-gourd in a wicker-work cover, like a bottle of aleatico or maraschino. The scene is a ruined stable, every stone of which is painted with the utmost care and fidelity. A few handfuls of thatch thrown upon joists protect the infant Jesus, on whom breathe the ox and the ass, whose saddle is placed in a corner. On the walls scurry lizards with quivering tails. A goldfinch is perched on the end of a beam and sings the birth of the Child. Such naturalism, associating the creation with God and making it play its part in the sacred drama, was unknown to the Early Masters, who, absorbed as they were by dogma, placed the sacred figures in the centre of golden backgrounds. In the sky above the Child, hovers the Holy Ghost in the form of a dove. On

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either side two angels fly in opposite directions, balancing symmetrically. Beyond the ruined stable is seen the countryside, the real countryside, on which shepherds are feeding their flocks. One of these shepherds, his dog lying near him, is playing on the pipe. All these details are painted firmly and accurately, and the colours, now darkened by time, must have been superb. Another painting by Filippo Lippi, "The Virgin and Child Jesus," adored by two holy abbots, is nearer the consecrated form, but the subject required it, and the painter has managed to exhibit his originality in curious and delightful details. In the centre of the composition the Virgin, standing on the steps of a throne, presents the Child Jesus to two holy personages on their knees. They hold in their hand the abbatial crozier, the mark of their dignity. Two archangels stand by the Virgin, bearing stalks of lilies. A multitude of little angels press around the throne, and the monk who is sheltered under their wings is said to be the artist; for in the course of his adventurous life, Filippo Lippi took the cowl, cast it aside, and among other adventures was taken captive by Moorish corsairs. So he was a monk after all, and as such has a right to figure devoutly in a sacred

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painting. His figures of the Virgin, of the Child Jesus, and of the saints are less emaciated than those of his contemporaries: the cheeks are cheerfully plump; the flesh, well modelled, has unusual relief. Gilding is still employed in this painting, but in sober and discreet fashion, in delicate hatchings which reflect the light; it is used by a painter and not by a binder tooling leather.

Filippo Lippi, who, it is said, was poisoned by the father of one of his mistresses, left a son, Filippino, a talented artist, whose frescoes in the church del Carmine at Florence are much admired.

Giovanni da Pietro, called lo Spagnoletto, for he was of Spanish origin, is represented in the Louvre by a "Nativity" charmingly composed in the style of Perugino, or rather, in the first still artless manner of Raphael, though with a personal touch. The Child Jesus lies on the ground on a white drapery, His limbs crossed, His finger in His mouth, like a babe yet unconscious of its divinity. He is worshipped by the Virgin, Saint Joseph, and three kneeling angels; three other angels soar in the azure, supporting a scroll on which is inscribed the glad news. At the back is seen Jerusalem, and the brilliant and barbaric cavalcade

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accompanying the Magi on their way from the far East. On a hillock an angel announces the miraculous birth to a shepherd watching his flock, and two herdsmen, one of whom bears a lamb, are hastening to worship the Child in its cradle.

I must abridge, much against my will, this review of the Early Masters, who are so interesting from an historical point of view, and whose works have the simple, awkward grace of the first steps of a child. I shall therefore merely mention Lorenzo di Pavia's "Family of the Blessed Virgin," a curious and lovely picture in which all the figures bear their names written upon scrolls, Roselli's "Coronation of the Virgin," Bernardo Perugino's "Crucified Christ," the paintings by Lorenzo Costa, "The Court of Isabella d'Este, Marchioness of Mantua," and the allegory of "Orpheus civilising Men;" Raibolini's (Francia) "Christ on the Cross," with Job at the foot, thinking his woes slight in comparison with those of the Saviour; the "Doctors of the Church," by Sacchi de Pavia, accompanied by the symbols of the Evangelists, an even, strong painting; and I return to Titian, Paolo Veronese, Giulio Romano, and other great masters of the finest period of art.

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Let us stop before Titian's "Jupiter and Antiope," which is known under the name of "Venus del Pardo," — I cannot imagine why, for it does not seem possible to mistake the subject. This important picture, which remained a long time in Spain, has undergone many vicissitudes. It was twice nearly burned, and has suffered from shameless restorations, which happily have been removed. Nonchalantly lying in the centre of the composition, Antiope, with one arm curved over her head, draws back with her other hand, by a delicate movement of sleeping modesty, the fold of her drapery over her hip. The fairness of her lovely body forms in the centre of the painting a luminous mass which strikes and holds the eye. Jupiter, who has assumed the ears and feet of a satyr, raises the sleeper's veil and contemplates her charms with greedy eyes, while Cupid, flying through the branches of the tree, the shade of which falls upon the nymph, shoots his bolt at the Master of the gods. On the left, a woman tressing flowers is seated by a satyr; and a hunter, who happens in unexpectedly in this mythological composition, with his two dogs leashed, shows to a companion, blowing a horn, a stag which hunters are pursuing in the distant landscape, itself

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superb; for there are no finer landscapes than those by historical painters, especially when the painter is called Titian.

Near-by shines radiantly the "Christ Crowned with Thorns," a masterpiece of colouring which the artist executed at the age of seventy-six, but which exhibits no trace whatever of advancing years. The bent knee of the Christ seems to issue from the canvas, so powerfully and splendidly does the light fall upon it; the soldiers who are mocking Him are painted with the most juvenile energy, and the whole scene stands out from a background of bossage architecture in which is set a bust of Tiberius, to indicate the date of Christ's execution.

Not far from this splendid composition is the admirable "Portrait of a Man," dressed in black, most noble, true, and lifelike, and a "Holy Family," in which the painter has introduced Saint Stephen, Saint Ambrosius, Bishop of Milan, in his red cope and robes, and Saint Maurice, the commander of the Theban legion, dressed in armour.

The first thing which attracts attention in Giulio Romano's "Nativity" is the tall figure of a bearded warrior, wearing antique armour with gilded leg-pieces,

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the green shadows and rosy lights on which are due to one of those curious colour effects familiar to Raphael's pupil. This saint who stands near the edge of the picture on the left, is Saint Longinus, the legionary who pierced Christ's side with his lance. He rests on his lance with one hand, and with the other presses to his breast a vase of mysterious form, made of crystal and gold, which is none else than the vase in which the angels collected the blood and water that issued from the Saviour's wound, and which, under the name of Holy Grail, so greatly exercised the chivalrous imagination of the Middle Ages. Saint John, dressed in a green robe and holding a cup from which issues a serpent, balances Saint Longinus. The Child Jesus, worshipped by the Virgin and Saint Joseph, occupies the centre of the composition. In the shadowy background is seen the angel announcing the miraculous birth to the shepherds. This painting, which somewhat shocks the eye by strange and discordant effects of colour, makes up for this defect by a grandeur of composition, beauty of drawing, and a pride of style which denote a master accustomed to bold fresco work, and worthy to collaborate in the masterpieces of the divine Sanzio.

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The "Portrait of Giulio Romano" by himself is also very fine, if the artist has avoided self-flattery. He is of the pure Italian type, and his olive complexion, his short, curly hair, and his black dress give him a proud, noble look.

Bonifazzio is a master worthy of inscribing his name on the Golden Book of Venetian painters. His palette is not less rich than that of Titian and Palma Vecchio, and it is easy to mistake his works for those of these great colourists. His "Raising of Lazarus" is a very fine picture. Jesus, followed by the disciples, standing between Martha and Mary, makes the gesture which calls the dead from the tomb. Lazarus, dazzled by the light, is rising, supported by two men. The gravity of the scene is somewhat disturbed by a too familiar and natural detail: one of the Jews witnessing the miracle stops his nose in order to avoid breathing the fetid odour from the open sepulchre. It is bad taste, but on the other hand, the gesture is so true and the figure so uncommonly well painted!

Here is still another Paolo Veronese, not less beautiful and not less superb than the paintings in the Salon Carré. It is easily recognisable by the great white architecture, which stands out this time against a sky

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that, painted doubtless with Egyptian ash, has blackened and now looks like veined marble. At the table which invariably appears in his paintings, the Venetian has seated Christ between the two apostles at Emmaüs. Busy servants bring dishes to the divine guest; and in order that the guests at his meal should have spectators, like kings who eat in public, Paolo Veronese has introduced his family. On the right his wife, with a very brilliant complexion and hair of Venetian gold, wearing pearls and a rich costume in the fashion of the day, holds in her arms a little child in its swaddling clothes; one of her sons clings with childish timidity to the skirt of her dress and tries to hide, while the other, one knee on the ground, is teasing a little spaniel. In the centre of the foreground, two little girls of seven and eight years of age, rosy and plump, with curling golden hair, in white damask dresses with gold figures, are playing with a great dog, utterly heedless of the miracle taking place behind them. It is difficult to imagine anything more charming, more graceful, and of a more tenderly luminous colour than this group which the painter has wrought out with paternal love. I can merely mention the "Angel leading Lot and his Two Daughters out of Sodom,"

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"Susannah and the Two Elders," and the "Portrait of a Woman" accompanied by a child with its hand upon a greyhound's head, the model of which seems to have been the same as that described in the painting of the Apostles at Emmaüs, and praise the masterly qualities of these works which are placed close to one another on the same wall of the Great Gallery.

Glance at the mystic "Marriage of Saint Catharine of Alexandria" by Orazio di Domenico Alfani, a little-known painter who deserves a greater reputation, and at the "Circumcision," by Ramenghi, called Bagnacavallo, a splendid composition set within a temple with spiral pillars.

Until recently, paintings alone were looked for in museums. Frescoes, from their very nature, seemed destined to remain forever fixed on the walls, the coating of which had imbibed the colours. Yet here are two fresco panels detached from their wall and placed on canvas. They are two fragments of the decoration painted by Bernardo Luini for the Palucca Convent at Monza: "The Infant Bacchus playing under an Arbour," and "Vulcan forging the Wings of Cupid." If the choice of mythological subjects

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seems unsuited to a convent, it is sufficient to remember the "Baths of Diana," which Corregio painted for the Convent at Parma. The dull, dead aspect of this painting, which looks like a pastel, surprises the eye accustomed to the lustre of oils, but there soon proves to be a great charm in that soft continuity in which nothing shimmers and which, by keeping down the details, brings out more strongly the lines of the composition. It is very much to be wished that there should be in the Louvre a hall devoted to frescoes selected from among those of the masters and which are threatened with approaching destruction; for if the fresco itself is unchangeable, the walls which support it are apt to become ruinous in time. Whatever the merit of the paintings exhibited here, they give but a very incomplete idea of the grand manner of the great Italian masters. It is in mural painting that they exhibited their finest genius.

The "Holy Family" by Francesco Mazzola, better known as Parmigiano, should not be passed over. The painter came from Parma like Corregio, whose works he studied carefully and whose grace he adopted and exaggerated. He is a mannered painter, but I must not speak ill of the Mannerists, for they are very

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clever, talented, ingenious people. The elegant slenderness, the coquettish poses, the somewhat affected, inclined heads, the turn of the hands, the slender fingers, the delicate oval faces, the lips with their sinuous smiles, the eyes with their lustrous glances, have a charm of their own, especially when it is Mazzola's brush that has prepared the feast.

I must mention also the "Angelic Salutation" by Giorgio Vasari, the father of all art critics. His "History of Painters" is better than his painting, in which, nevertheless, one recognises the clever man who was the pupil of Michael Angelo.

This "Portrait of an Old Man," with short hair, long, white beard, and eyes ringed with great dark circles, a virile, serious, and still robust face, is that of Tintoretto, who painted himself at an advanced age. I mention it in order to set this great master in his proper position; he might not be properly estimated if he were judged by the paintings, although very fine, yet not important enough, which the Louvre possesses. Unquestionably the "Susannah at the Bath" in the Salon Carré is a remarkable work, and the "Paradise" in the Hall of the Early Masters is an amazingly bold and virile sketch, but to know Tintoretto properly, one

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must have seen at the Academy of the Fine Arts in Venice, the "Miracle of Saint Mark," and in the Scuola di San Rocco the vast "Crucifixion," so vigorous, so energetic, so pathetic, which is one of the marvels of painting.

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VI

THE SECOND BAY OF THE GREAT GALLERY

HERE an arcade supported by pillars marks, in the long gallery, a sort of rest. Beyond, the Italian school is continued, but already men of talent take the place of men of genius and clever painters succeed the great. In their works, still meritorious, may be seen the germs of approaching decadence. Here is Guido Reni, who comes with many pictures. He was a wonderfully talented painter, but the gambler spoiled the artist, and he ended his days in solitude and sadness after a career which had opened very brilliantly. With Domenichino and the Carracci, first his masters and then his envious rivals, he is the glory of the school of Bologna; for the centre of painting was no longer in Venice, Florence, or Rome; after the death of the gods of art it moved to Bologna.

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At the first glance one sees upon the wall a "Hercules and the Lernean Hydra," a great academic figure, violently muscular and of a reddish colour, belonging to the time when Guido was imitating Caravaggio and had not yet adopted the bluish, silvery, transparent colouring which won him such success. The "Combat between Hercules and Achelous" is in the same style as his "Hercules on the Burning Pile." These three paintings, in which the figures are greater than life, exhibit an exaggeration of vigour and a determination to show great anatomical knowledge, which are not in harmony with the real temperament of the artist, who was more graceful than strong. The same may be said of his "Saint Sebastian," a fine study in Guercino's manner.

I shall group together here, so as not to have to return to them, the paintings by Guido which are scattered through this part of the gallery. One of the most remarkable is "David Triumphing over Goliath." The young victor, wearing a plumed toque, which perhaps is not rigorously accurate, exhibits, against a background of shadow, a charmingly delicate profile, the almost feminine softness of which happily contrasts with the monstrous head of the Philistine giant which

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David raises with one hand, while with the other he holds the sling, the instrument of his victory. The movement with which he leans against a broken column is exceedingly elegant. The "Purification of the Virgin" is marked by clever composition. The Virgin, kneeling before Simeon, is seen in profile. She is accompanied by Saint Joseph and Saint Anne. A young girl offers in her behalf the two turtle-doves required by the law, and in the foreground a charmingly graceful child teases a couple of other pigeons placed on a table. I can merely mention "Jesus giving the Keys to Saint Peter," the "Annunciation," "Jesus and the Samaritan Woman," the "Madonna and Child Jesus," paintings noteworthy for the ingenious arrangement of the composition, the facility of the drawing, and the freedom of the touch, which is sure and quick; for the masters of the second period all excelled in the technical practice of their art.

But I have to speak of the "Magdalen," a type invented and multiplied by Guido. With her head slightly thrown back, the saint, whose features recall those of the Niobe of antiquity, raises to heaven eyes full of ecstasy and moist with tears and light. Guido boasted that he knew two hundred ways of making a

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face look upwards, and he spoke the truth. This Magdalen is of a pearly colour with faint rosy tints; a delicate bluish shadow is cast over the shoulders, down which streams her loose golden hair. One must not seek here the austere expression of Christian repentance, but a certain sentimental and coquettish melancholy such as modern beauties may occasionally feel in hours of solitude. These charming figures explain the popularity of Guido, who multiplied them in profusion; but his finest work is the "Aurora Preceding the Chariot of the Sun, surrounded by the Hours," painted in fresco on one of the walls of the Rospigliosi Palace at Rome.

In Cigoli's "Saint Francis of Assisi in Prayer," his thin hands, marked with the miraculous stigmata, pressed to his breast, there is an ascetic fervour and an ecstasy worthy of Spain.

Domenichino's "Saint Cecilia" has been made popular by engravings. Wearing a sort of turban, her eyes raised to heaven, the holy patroness of musicians sings, accompanying herself on the bass viol; a little angel, who acts as lectern, holds the score open before her, but she is not looking at it, for her soul is soaring in celestial space. This picture fairly sums up Domeni-

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chino's talent; a grace somewhat heavy in its naïveté, but attractive through this very sincerity, a genuine sentiment for nature, in the expression of which will is more evident than natural talent. Domenichino, who was called the Ox of Painting, has none the less traced a glorious furrow. The "Communion of Saint Jerome" in the Vatican ranks among the marvels of art, and the frescoes which he painted in churches and monuments are justly admired. The Louvre has by him "Timoclea brought before Alexander," "Rinaldo and Armida," "Herminia among the Shepherds," historical and romantic subjects rare in Italian painting, which devoted itself to altar pieces and religious subjects. Rinaldo lies at the feet of the enchantress in the gardens described by Tasso. The background represents, through openings in the foliage, upspringing jets of water and fairy architecture. Behind a clump of trees are seen Ubaldo and the Danish knight coming in search of Rinaldo. Naturally this subject has for accessories turtle-doves billing and cooing, and little Cupids asleep or awake; but one scarcely expects a magnificent yellow, blue, and red Arras parrot perched on a tree near the amorous group. Herminia, staggering under the weight of Clorinda's armour which

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she has put on, appears before the shepherds with a shy grace admirably rendered.

In the "Holy Family," which might just as well be called the "Flight into Egypt," the Virgin draws water from a spring with a shell, the Child Jesus takes a fruit offered him by Saint John, and Saint Joseph is unsaddling the ass. In his solemn subjects, Domenichino has a pleasing way of introducing some naïve detail which recalls nature. Let me mention the "Apparition of the Virgin to Saint Anthony of Padua," the "Triumph of Love," which has at last been replaced in the centre of the garland of flowers which the Jesuit, Daniel Seghers, had placed around it, "David Playing on the Harp," and a landscape with mythological figures.

Look at the beautiful portrait by Carlo Maratti, representing Maria Maddalena Rospigliosi dressed in black, her arms bare to the elbow, playing with a fan. Carlo Maratti enjoyed in his lifetime a prodigious popularity, which he partly deserved. His glory is much diminished, for after the reaction towards what is called good taste, people are usually very unjust towards decadent painters, who are very clever, talented, and skilful people, as is proved by a glance at

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the "Portrait of the Artist," painted by himself, "The Sleep of Jesus," "The Nativity," "Saint John the Baptist Preaching," and the "Mystical Marriage of Saint Catharine of Alexandria," — charming paintings, pleasant in colour, clever in touch.

What I have just said of Carlo Maratti may be said of Pietro da Cortona, who lived before him, having been born towards the end of the sixteenth century, but who was his contemporary, for he lived until after 1660. He also is a Decadent. None the less, the "Meeting of Jacob and Laban" is a masterpiece. The group of Rachel and Leah, standing with their children under the great overshadowing trees, while Jacob and Laban, the father-in-law and son-in-law, cement their union by sacrificing a ram on an altar of stone and clods of earth, is charming and superb. The heads are lovely, the hands and feet are delicate, the draperies light and flowing, the colouring warm and golden, and the style elegant and noble.

The "Nativity of the Virgin" is also a very engaging picture. It is impossible not to be taken with the amiable, smiling look of the faces, full of plump grace and youth, — a peculiarity of the women painted by Pietro da Cortona. The groups are intelligently ar-

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ranged, the colouring is rich and the touch is clever. I confess that these qualities, though late, satisfy me as much as the angular drawing, the raised gold-work, and the miniature-like colouring of the Early Masters, whom it is fashionable to speak of only with the deepest veneration.

"Saint Martina Refusing to Sacrifice to the Idols" is a painting of noticeable merit, which would be willingly admired but for that terrible word, "decadence." Pietro da Cortona was also painter and architect in ordinary to Saint Martina, whose relics were exhumed in 1634. Pope Urban VIII caused a church to be erected in honour of the new saint, and Pietro it was who drew the plans. He has several times painted subjects drawn from this legend. The Louvre possesses two charming pictures, variants of the same theme, representing the Virgin and the Child Jesus receiving Saint Martina, who leans upon a pitchfork, the instrument of her death.

If you have never gone to Venice, you should stop before Canaletto's painting which represents the "Madonna della Salute" at the entrance to the Grand Canal, and you may consider that you have made the trip. Reality could not tell you anything more, the

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illusion is so thoroughly complete. There is the very church with its white domes, the Dogana, the palaces laved by the waters, the *traghetti*, the gondolas, the crafts of all kinds, and the emerald sparkle of the short waves of the lagoons. It is indeed calm and joyous Venice, an operatic set-scene, enlivened by clever figures by Tiepolo.

I can merely name Francesco Moti, not having time to describe his work, good though it is; and I pass to Domenico Feti's "Melancholy," which is utterly unlike Albert Dürer's "Melancholy," but none the less meritorious. It represents a robust-looking woman kneeling by a block of stone, on which she leans as she rests her brow upon her left hand; in her right, she holds a death's-head, and contemplates it in deep reverie, as if lost in unending reflections. Around her lie brushes, a palette, books, and the torso of a statue; a dog is half asleep, and on a block by a globe, a clepsydra measures the vanishing hours. At the back are faintly seen distant ruins. The realistic power of this "Melancholy" with its *contadina's* dress is unforgettable. "Pastoral Life," a painting better known as "The Spinner," represents a peasant woman seated at the foot of a tree with a couple of children by her; in

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the distance a man is ploughing. It is the Golden Age translated into prose, and into good prose at that. The "Roman Cæsar," whether it represent Nero or Titus, has the proudest port and the haughtiest mien imaginable.

Michael Angelo da Caravaggio (Amerighi) is a robust, grim, and violent painter who cares nothing for the ideal, and clings to nature with so strong a grasp that he can produce remarkable works in which character takes the place of beauty. Besides, Caravaggio made his mark; he created a school, and greater painters than he have imitated him. He has plainly impressed himself on Ribera, Guercino, Guido, Manfredi, Leonillo, Spada, Valentino, and others. From his sombre shadows flash dazzling lights. His painting of the "Death of the Virgin" is a magnificent piece of work, most deep and dramatic. "The Fortune Teller," "The Concert," the "Portrait of Alof de Vignacourt, Grand Master of the Order of Malta," are energetic, true, and singularly powerful works. It may be said of Caravaggio's colouring, as of Tertullian's style, that it has the sombre brilliancy of ebony.

Annibale Carracci has in this part of the gallery a "Resurrection," a good piece of work, well painted, and some landscapes which give a foretaste of Poussin.

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"Hunting" and "Fishing" are full of figures which reveal the master hand of the historical painter.

I pass quickly by Albano and his invariable mythological reproductions, — Venuses, nymphs, Cupids, showing white against a dark-green landscape, and in the foreground a bit of classical architecture, and I come to Salvator Rosa's "Witch of Endor," a Romanticist painting painted before Romanticism existed. The pythoness, an old witch, curiously lighted by the flame of the fire she is poking, calls up the shade of Samuel, who appears, his spectral face half veiled by a sinister drapery resembling a shroud. Terrible and gloomy indeed is the phantom brought from the tomb by necromantic formulæ. Saul, prostrate, scarcely dares question it, and the two guards who accompany him draw back pale with terror. In the background through the shadows is seen a hideous swarm of fantastic shapes, — fleshless horse's-heads, skeletons with bat's-wings, owls with yellow, phosphorescent eyes, — in a word, the whole round of the Sabbath, painted in a confused, well-kept-down tone which, by its very indecision, increases the terror; for one feels there is more than can be seen.

"A Battle" is a painting of rare energy and strange beauty. The battle is not of any particular time, and

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has no relation to any historical fact. It is Battle in itself; personified, so to speak. Near a portico with pillars of reddish marble horsemen charge each other with incredible fury, impetuosity, and bitterness. They cut, thrust, slash, hammer, and throw each other off their heavy-cruppered horses, using a whole arsenal of antique, barbaric, ferocious weapons. In the background, the flying are galloping madly to reach the mountains, and over the bloody fight hangs a sky full of threatening clouds, in which the storm seems to carry on the discord of earth.

Salvator Rosa was the first to introduce into art what is called picturesqueness, an element quite unknown to the old masters, — a curious, singular aspect of nature, an unexpected effect of light and shade, a sinister outline of rock, a heaping up of huge clouds. The painting by Salvator Rosa in the Louvre, called simply "A Landscape," sums up the poetics of this kind of work. A stormy sky, the black waters of a torrent, half-uprooted trees, rocks rent as if by convulsions of nature, grim figures that seem posted in ambush, forming, on the whole, a piquant effect which makes one remark, "What a fine piece of stage-setting it would make!"

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VII

THE SPANISH SCHOOL

THE Spanish school is represented in the Louvre by a small number of masters and paintings only, but both masters and paintings are of the first rank.

Every one knows how seldom the works of Don Diego Velasquez de Silva are to be met with outside of Spain. He painted almost exclusively for his royal admirer, Philip IV, and his genius, under the influence of the jealous favour of the monarch, was not permitted to exhibit itself freely outside of the country; but his reputation, somewhat puzzling to those who have not crossed the Pyrenees and visited the museum at Madrid, is none the less very great. In Madrid only can one learn to know Velasquez thoroughly; as a portrait painter he was as great as Titian and Van Dyck, and perhaps he came nearest to nature while using extremely simple methods. He was often called upon to perform the ungrateful task of painting his

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King, who was not handsome; but Spanish painters, who are realists by temperament, do not fear ugliness, though they know how to represent beauty when necessary. So Velasquez reproduced with perfect resignation that weak, blank face, which shows so clearly the exhaustion of a race. The Louvre possesses one of these portraits. The King, dressed in brown, musket in one hand, cap in the other, in the centre of a tawny landscape that takes nothing from the importance of the figure, seems to be taking breath as he rests for a moment from the fatigues of the chase. Near him, seated on his quarters, is a dog, a mastiff with a yellow coat, his faithful companion and disinterested courtier. Nothing could be simpler, plainer, or marked by greater breadth. It is nature itself.

If the father is not handsome, the daughter is lovely. Exquisite indeed is that little Infanta Marguerite, with the pink bow in her golden hair and her dress of pearly gray taffeta trimmed with black lace. Even the artlessness of childhood does not conceal in that dainty figure the conscious dignity of rank; she is a little girl, but a king's daughter who will be a queen some day. When one looks at this masterpiece, memory

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recalls another picture, Hugo's "The Rose of the Infanta," in which the poet seems to have picked up the brush of Velasquez in the Escorial, as the German Cæsar picked up the brush of Titian.

Though a half-length "Portrait of Don Pedro Moscosco de Altamira," Dean of the royal chapel of Toledo, holding in his hand a breviary from which his glance strays towards the spectator, and a painting in which there are several figures of small size, — representing, it is said, various artists, contemporaries of Velasquez, who painted himself by the side of Murillo, — do not mark the greatness of the great Spanish master, they suffice to give an idea of his genius.

The Louvre is much richer in Murillos. The Seville painter was not hemmed in by royal favour like his Madrid compeer. Besides the two magnificent paintings in the Salon Carré, the Louvre possesses several other masterpieces by the Seville artist. "The Nativity of the Virgin" is full of the familiar grace of genuinely Catholic painters, who so innocently mingle the details of common life with sacred things. There are two very distinct sides to this charming painting, which nevertheless are harmonised most hap-

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pily: first, the scene of the Nativity, such as it might occur within a humble country dwelling; next, the miraculous intervention of celestial beings present at the birth of her who, while a virgin, is to become the mother of the Saviour. In the corner, under the serge dais of a rustic bed, is seen Saint Anne, around whom press relatives brought by Saint Joachim; on the other side, women warming clothes by the fire; in the centre, an old woman and a young servant, seen from behind, holding the new-born child, which raises its little rosy hands to heaven. That is the realistic side; now here is the legendary. From the beautiful little body proceeds a supernatural light that illumines the whole group and the surrounding objects; angels of celestial beauty bend behind the old woman to worship the new-born Virgin, and cherubs take clothes from a basket in an endeavor to make themselves useful. In the upper part of the painting flutters a chorus of little cherubs. No one in the room seems to suspect the presence of these divine guests, not even the Havana poodle with its long, white, silky coat. The whole of the central group, illumined by the Virgin's aureole, is incomparably brilliant; it is a perfect bouquet of delicate, luminous tones.

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It needs the artless faith of a Spanish Catholic to paint with such deep seriousness the "Miracle of Saint Diego," familiarly called "The Angels' Kitchen," two words which do not strike one as properly collocated. The touching legend from which the subject has been drawn, is summed up in eight Spanish verses, rather difficult to read, inscribed on a cartouche at the bottom of the picture.

The monks of San Diego lived in such austerity and were so utterly forgetful of earthly things that more than once the plainest food was lacking, and famine followed fasting. Saint Diego, one day when the lack of food could no longer be borne even by monks accustomed to every kind of privation, knelt and prayed to Heaven. His prayer was so fervent that it uplifted him and left him suspended in air, like the Magdalen in the "Holy Balm." Three persons dressed in black, regular hidalgos, knights of the order of San Jago and of Calatrava, enter gravely at one end of the painting, and look admiringly upon the saint kneeling on air. But this is only half the miracle. Angels have come down from above, bearing provisions; to the great amazement of the cook, they are lighting the fires, cleaning the pots, preparing dishes, and cooking for

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the worthy monks a repast worthy of Gamaccio. I cannot describe the celestial grace with which these celestial cooks perform their business. They are as full of zeal and charity as if they themselves, immaterial creatures which feel no other need than to love and adore God, knew what hunger was. One of them, though accustomed to the suave odours of paradise, does not hesitate to crush garlic in a mortar, — garlic being the essential condiment of Spanish cookery. All this is done with such ingenuous and charming good faith that it is impossible not to believe in the miracle. Not the faintest smile of incredulity curls the lips, even were one a greater sceptic than Pyrrho himself. The Flemish, though it is their business to do so, never polished stewpans or cleaned vegetables better than Murillo, and they are quite unable to paint angels as graceful and charming as his.

Spain never disdained ugliness, wretchedness, and uncleanliness in art. Under the rags, the deformities, the filth, there is a soul; the poor wretch is a Christian; the mendicant devoured by vermin will perhaps be in glory, therefore he deserves to be painted just as much as a king; so Murillo, on his palette of rose, lily, and azure, prepared by the angels for the depict-

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ing of the Virgin, manages to find tawny tones, golden browns, warm blacks, when he has to paint a "Beggar." At the foot of a wall lighted by a sunbeam he shows us a dirty youth opening his ragged shirt and indulging in the liveliest hunt. It is a marvel of life, light, and colour. Don Diego Velasquez da Silva, the older painter, was no more particular than Murillo; he also would put aside kings, queens, infants, infantas, and ministers, to paint drunkards, dwarfs, philosophers, and gipsies, and even freaks, and they are not his least beautiful paintings.

The Virgin known as the "Virgin with the Chaplet," because the Child Jesus is playing with the grains of a rosary, has no resemblance to the Italian Madonnas. It is the Andalusian Virgin, with velvety black eyes; a fair brunette with rich complexion, who would wear a mantilla even better than the traditional veil. Her innocence is less cold, though none the less pure, and she joins to the merit of a lovely form that of an adorable colour.

Herrera the Elder was a master of terrible and grim temper. The aspect of his paintings confirms the legend. "Saint Basilius presiding at a Council" has indeed the most repellent face imaginable, and the Holy

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Ghost soaring above his mitre looks like a falcon swooping down upon his prey. Never did bandits have more sinister heads than the bishops, monks, and inquisitors around. There is in particular a worn, thin, bony monk, half sunk in his hood, whose convulsive, sardonic smile is really terrifying. If he were to throw off his gown, the red doublet, short cape, and cloven foot of Mephistopheles would surely become evident.

A painting by Zurbaran, "The Death of Saint Peter Nolasco," a "Landscape" by Callantes, and a "Portrait" by Goya complete the Spanish gallery.

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VIII

THE GERMAN, FLEMISH, AND DUTCH SCHOOLS

WE have reached a point in the gallery where two groups of coupled columns placed against each wall form a sort of vestibule preceding the space reserved to the schools of Flanders, Holland, and Germany. Here are placed a few paintings of older date, showing the origins of art in the northern countries, insufficiently no doubt as regards knowledge and chronology, but sufficiently for imagination.

Who was the painter of this picture, so singularly composed, divided into three parts, in the upper of which is "Saint Francis of Assisi receiving the Stigmata," in the centre the preparations for the "Entombment of Christ," and in the lower "The Last Supper," at which appear, between Jesus and the Twelve Apostles, two personages: the giver of the painting dressed

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in black, his hands clasped, and the artist under the features of a servant who is pouring out wine? No one knows. The names of Lucas van Leyden, Quintin Matsys, and Holbein have each been suggested, but no sufficient proof furnished. It seems to be rather by Jan de Mabuse. In any case, it is a very remarkable work, in which a genuine feeling for nature shows through archaic stiffness. The drawing is close, the colouring correct, and everything indicates a master.

"The Descent from the Cross," which is most probably by Quintin Matsys, is also a very fine work. Art begins to emerge from its Gothic swaddling-clothes, faces begin to have expression, gestures to be dramatic, and the excessive care bestowed on accessories does not conceal the main thought in the painting. There are still here and there stiff folds broken in angular fashion, awkward joinings of limbs dislocated or stiffened, and lack of perspective; but the grief of the Holy Women is well rendered, the tears they shed are sincere, and the deep sorrow of the scene penetrates the beholder.

Quintin Matsys has often repeated the motive of the man weighing gold, with different accessories. That in the Louvre, "A Banker and His Wife," represents

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a man wearing a black toque and a blue dress edged with fur. He is weighing pieces of gold in a pair of scales upon a table covered with a green carpet. Near him his wife, in a red gown, holds an illuminated missal. Rings, pearls, and a convex mirror which reflects objects outside of the picture, are scattered on the table; in the background on shelves are glass bottles, an orange, papers, registers, bundles of letters, and the various articles to be found in the shop of a money changer. It would be hard to carry farther truth and carefulness of execution.

One would scarcely suspect, on looking at that nude young woman wearing a red hood and a necklace of gems, and who is walking in a landscape on the horizon of which shows a Gothic city, with its towers, belfries, and steeples, that she is the Mother and Queen of Love. And yet it is Venus, — Lady Venus, as the Minnesingers called her, who, turning to account the fact that the worthy knight Tannhäuser is asleep, ventures forth from the mountain which is her usual residence. The mediæval painters rarely painted the nude, and it is interesting, when they do so, to see what was their ideal of feminine beauty. This "Venus" by Lucas Cranach is thin, slender, with small breasts and

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narrow hips, like those of a young girl who is not yet fully developed; she looks like one of the statues placed in the porches of cathedrals stripped of her stone dress. She is pretty, all the same, in her firm, living slenderness, and her nudity has an amazed awkwardness which is not lacking in grace.

Lucas Cranach has also in the Louvre two handsome portraits of men: the "Portrait of John Frederick, Elector of Saxony," and that of a man in rich costume whose name is not known, although the pearl embroidery upon his breast is in the shape of S's and seems to indicate that that was the initial of his name.

I mention Mabuse's "Virgin and Child Jesus," with its death's head and its inscription full of Christian melancholy; the "Christ before Pilate" by Wohlgemuth, Albert Dürer's master; the magnificent portraits by Hans Holbein, representing "The Astronomer of Henry VIII, King of England," and "William Warren, Bishop of London"; and I close with the "Death of Adonis" by Rottenhammer, a mythological painting in the Italian mannered style, which one is surprised to find among works somewhat stiff in their gravity; a "Dwarf holding a Mastiff in Leash," by Antonio

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Moro, who was called Antonio de Mor; and a "Venus" by Zustris, a tall figure, superbly elegant, which recalls the bold and slender grace of Jean Goujon's "Diana."

As we enter the sanctuary of the art of the North, let us salute Rembrandt, the most original, the most magical, the most intense of all the masters who in their foggy climate dreamed of sunlight and rendered it better perhaps than even the Italians with their brown flesh and its background of unchanging blue. "The Angel Raphael Leaving Tobias" is a marvel. It is a small easel-painting, but grander than many a vast canvas covering great stretches of wall. Rembrandt has put the whole of heaven within this small frame. Tobias's protecting angel, having fulfilled his mission, casts off his disguise and ascends to heaven with such swift speed that his wings seem to flutter almost invisible in the shimmer of light. His robe flies out like a cloud, his golden hair sparkles amid the beams, and he vanishes through the splendour. On the left, on the threshold of the house reached by a few steps, Tobias's young wife in an attitude of admiration, his mother Anna, who had doubted the celestial intervention and lets fall her crutch in astonishment at the sight

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of the miracle, and lower down the young husband and his father, kneeling or prostrate, returning thanks to God. The whole of this portion of the painting is bathed in a transparent, warm shadow on which blazes like the lightning the dazzling brilliancy which the angel sheds around him.

But Rembrandt is not merely a pyrotechnical prestidigitator, a magician of light, thinking only of effects; he has in the highest degree the feeling for humanity, religion, and pathos. Under forms at times common, trivial, and lacking nobility, — in the drawing, for his colour is always marvellously fine, — he succeeds in expressing the most delicate feelings of the soul. What emotion and tenderness, what angelic charity, are exhibited in "The Good Samaritan" who recommends to the people of the inn, whither he has transported him, the poor, wounded man picked up by the roadside, whose expenses he defrays! You worthy Samaritan, you are better than all the Pharisees in the world, and Rembrandt has given you the most honest, cordial, and sympathetic face which your kindly Dutch ugliness is capable of having. You are a worthy man and you shall go to Paradise in spite of your nationality and your religion.

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In "The Pilgrims at Emmaüs" the sudden burst of starry light on the brow of the Christ, who is breaking and blessing bread at the table at which He has seated Himself with the disciples, illumines the whole painting. The expressions and the attitudes of the disciples as they recognise their beloved Master are full of love, adoration, and delighted surprise.

Did not Rembrandt, when he painted that "Philosopher Meditating," wish to create an interior in which he might lodge his mysterious thought? The painter, who had something of the alchemist in him, surely must have desired to have for a studio and laboratory a great arched hall like this one, its corners lost in shadows from out of which ascend spiral staircases, its darksome depths full of vague chimeras, with thick walls, lighted by a single lead-trellised window, glazed with greenish panes filtering a scanty light that falls upon a table laden with globes, sextants, almagesta, old necromantic-looking books, and by the side of which meditates, sunk in his arm-chair, an old man in a furred robe, wizard as much as philosopher, alchemist as much as doctor. I fancy I can see the very genius of Rembrandt in that figure with its rabbinical face, meditating under a beam of light in the midst of shadows that grow denser as

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they recede from the light. Rembrandt has twice represented this subject with some variants. In one of the paintings the philosopher is absolutely alone with his Faustus accessories; in the other, domestic life is felt moving around the dreamer, discreet and silent, walking on tiptoe; a woman carrying a pail climbs a spiral staircase, a younger maid, kneeling before the hearth, is hanging a stewpan on the crane and stirring up the fire; but these details have to be sought for in the obscurity of the background, purposely kept back to allow the skull and book of the scholar alone to shine.

The Louvre has three or four portraits of Rembrandt which represent him at different periods of his life. He liked to take himself for a model, and he has multiplied his portrait under different aspects. Every one of these pictures, in which he is arrayed in fantastic taste, — doublets of velvet whereon golden chains scatter luminous points, linen showing its golden whiteness through some opening, toques, the aigrettes fastened with a gem, — are incomparable masterpieces, wonders of modelling, colour, and life; but the handsomest is perhaps the serious, pale young man whose oval face is framed in by long hair such as the Romanticists of 1830

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used to wear. Never has Rembrandt attained greater nobility than in this handsome head with its romantic charm.

I may mention also two or three heads of old men in which the irregular touch of Rembrandt expresses with wonderful skill the deep wrinkles and the senile flats. The painter of "The Night Watch" has found a new series of tones in colours; his paintings seem to have been covered with a golden varnish similar to the golden tones of salt herring that appears to be glazed with brown over gold foil. In his darkest touches Rembrandt is never black. A ruddy warmth penetrates his shadows and makes them transparent. The most sombre of painters, he has the most light. Amsterdam, thanks to Rembrandt, rivals Venice, and the two cities laved by canals are the Queens of colour.

Rubens, the sovereign of Antwerp, the artist of Titanic temperament, who seems, like Michael Angelo, to have lived in a world of colossi, Hercules, and athletes, occupies much space in the Louvre. The "Life of Mary de' Medici," treated allegorically according to the fashion of the time, covers two great walls of the gallery. It comprises no less than twenty-one paintings, the figures in which, often very numerous,

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are life-size. In this series, which he executed in less than four years, Rubens displayed marvellous fertility of invention, although he allowed himself to indulge too frequently in his decorative facility and introduced mythological figures here and there, by way of padding. But the general appearance of the work is brilliant, superb and pompous, and has the ceremonial magnificence required by the subject. Never was a royal order better executed, and the gallery of Mary de' Medici is a masterpiece of official painting. Through the obligatory commonplace the master hand sends dazzling flashes of light. Like Raphael, whom he is so unlike in other respects, Rubens was an artist admired from the very first, and his career was one long triumph. He possessed genius, but luck also was his, and the crowd, so ready to despise talent which is not fashionable, was fascinated by his pomp, his brilliant mode of life, and his fine manners. His was a facile nature, amiable and generous, with an aptitude for diplomacy of which he gave proof in several negotiations. Rubens had around him, in the splendid studio of his Antwerp palace, a band of devoted pupils imbued with his doctrine, initiated into his manner, who prepared his canvases from his sketches, and left him

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merely the final touches to put on. The master excelled in making wholly his own and in stamping with his touch works thus sketched out. The "Life of Mary de' Medici" is a proof of this. Van Dyck, Justus van Egmont, Jordaëns, Van Mol, Cornelius Schut, de Vos, Van Uden, Snyders, Momper, Wildens, and others worked at it, and yet that vast series of paintings is marked by striking unity. One would swear it was the work of the same palette, and the master's touch is seen everywhere. In the same way, towards the end of his life, overwhelmed with orders, a victim to his own glory, the Painter of Urbino had no longer time to paint, and intrusted to his pupils the carrying out of his subjects.

I have no room to describe these twenty-one paintings, most of them of complicated composition, and the allegorical meaning of which would require lengthy comments. I shall simply pick out the subjects which have struck me most and in which the master's touch appears most plainly. "The Fate of Mary de' Medici" is being spun by three Fates with ample forms, of exuberant Flemish health, and unapproachable freshness of tone and bloom of life. Such robust, well fleshed Fates must surely spin golden days of unending length.

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The three spinners are sitting on clouds, and in the upper portion of the composition is seen, on the summit of Mount Ida, Jupiter, whom Juno caresses with adorable lovingness and a delicate feminine grace which Rubens occasionally lacks. She seeks permission to be present at the birth of the princess. In "The Education of Mary de' Medici," the group of the three Graces, relieved of the white napkin draperies that had been painted on through a mistaken scruple of devotion, delight the eye by their elegant attitude, and their pearly whiteness has the effect of a lily in Rubens' rather red bouquet of roses. The composition of "Henry IV looking at the Portrait of Mary de' Medici, presented to him by Cupid and Hymen" is ingenious, and allegory is happily harmonised with reality. In the "Landing of Mary de' Medici at Calais," the marine deities which have accompanied and protected the vessel, especially the three Nereids in the foreground, are greatly admired. They are intertwined like three marine Graces, as they raise above the waves their soft, fleshy bodies, with satin-like shoulders and firm, dimpled loins, on which the foam breaks in pearls, while the fish-like legs ending in fins disappear under the green waves. Curiously, a letter of Rubens tells us

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the name and dwelling of the women who posed for these three masterpieces. They were two ladies, called Caparo, living in the Rue de Vertbois, and their little niece Louise. The great Antwerp painter begs one of his friends to engage them for the third week so that he may make from them three life-size studies. The rendering of the flesh, the grain of the skin and the moist shimmer of light have never been better represented.

In the "Birth of Louis XIII," the head of Mary de' Medici, sorrowful and smiling, expresses admirably the suffering of childbirth and the joy of having brought forth a Dauphin into the world. A faint rosy flush warms the pallor of the patient, and makes the radiant though pain-contracted face one of the marvels of painting.

"The Coronation of Mary de' Medici" is one of the finest paintings of the series, and may be considered a perfect model of official painting. This time allegory is not intermingled with historical reality, and instead of great nude women flying through the air, — though they have a merit of their own when Rubens paints them, — we have real historical portraits: illustrious personages of high, proud mien, with masses of

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brocàde, velvet, and satin. On the other hand, "The Administration of the Queen" most unexpectedly transports us into Olympus. Jupiter and Juno are having doves harnessed to the car of France, which is driven by Cupid. Apollo, Minerva, and Mars, who tears himself away from Venus, repel and combat Envy, Hatred, and Fraud, monsters whose ugliness brings out more strongly the beauty of the celestial beings. It is interesting to note, in this vast composition, the manner in which Rubens translated into Flemish the Greek beauty of the dwellers in Olympus. These noble forms are too pure and tranquil for his turbulent brush. He has imparted motion to them, he has made them more round, he has enlarged them, he has bossed them with muscles, but he has preserved their divinity by his colour. They have indeed the flesh of the gods, made of ambrosia and nectar, rosy as royal purple, white as the snows of Olympus. The torso of Venus seems to be made of the mica of Paros and spangles of foam.

I shall not examine this endless series in full; occasionally the constraint of official work makes itself felt, but the least good picture still contains admirable parts, flashes of genius, and bears always in some point the

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mighty touch of the master. The *ensemble* is broad, rich, majestic, powerful. It harmonises admirably with the style of the monument to be decorated, and Rubens alone, with his exuberance, could have carried out that gigantic undertaking, which would have sufficed to fill the life of any other painter.

These illustrations of the life of Mary de' Medici contain, as I have said, no less than twenty-one paintings, which formerly occupied the whole of a gallery in the Luxembourg, whence they were taken to the Louvre.

Three portraits, connected with the series, were painted by Rubens to adorn the mantelpiece of the hall. They are the portraits of Francesco de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, father of Mary de' Medici, of Joanna of Austria, Grand Duchess of Tuscany, and mother of the Queen, and of Mary de' Medici herself, at the age of seventy-eight, represented as Bellona crowned by the Genius of War.

The "Portrait of Baron Henry de Vicq," ambassador of the Low Countries to the French Court, who had served Rubens a great deal in the negotiations about the paintings of the life of Mary de' Medici, represents a man with a clever, intelligent face, worn

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by the life of the world and diplomatic labours, with gray beard and moustaches, a large ruff and a doublet of black velvet. It is undoubtedly one of Rubens' best portraits, and one feels that the artist was working for an intelligent model capable of appreciating him.

Now we come upon Rubens' genius freed from constraint. A masterpiece indeed is "Lot's Flight," one of the few paintings which the master deigned to sign. It is one of the richest gems in his splendid casket. Never was his colour more pearly, more transparent, more rosy, more golden, or fuller of light and life. The small size of the picture adds to the perfection of the painting by the care, the delicacy, and the lightness of touch which the artist was compelled to use. An angel, with swan-like wings, the down on which is fluttering, guides Lot and his family out of the impure city which the fire of heaven is about to destroy, and on which already, in the distance, the ministers of divine vengeance are casting their thunderbolts. One of Lot's daughters bears away in a basket the domestic treasure, the most precious and lightest articles; an ass carries the heavy baggage. The patriarch's wife, the disobedient woman who will presently be changed into a statue of salt, seems to leave regret-

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fully the dwelling, whose portico with composite columns and square posts is in the style of architecture in vogue at Antwerp in Rubens' day. On the threshold of the house, ready to leave, is Lot's other daughter. Unquestionably she is the most graceful feminine figure the artist ever painted. There is no trace of the Flemish heaviness which occasionally spoils his handsome women; the face of the lovely girl, a masterpiece of chiaroscuro, is illumined with incredibly delicate rosy and bluish reflections.

Lack of space — it would take a volume to describe the works of Rubens that enrich the Louvre — compels me merely to mention "The Prophet Elias in the Desert," "The Flight into Egypt," "The Crucified Christ," the "Triumph of Religion," a colossal painting, "The Adoration of the Magi," the "Virgin and The Holy Innocents," a "Virgin and Child Jesus, and an Angel amid a Wreath of Flowers," which is supposed to have been painted by Breughel; several portraits wonderful for their life and colour; but I shall dwell somewhat on the "Tourney near a Castle Moat," which exhibits Rubens under a new aspect, and proves he was no less a landscape painter than a great historical painter. Six knights are con-

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tending in front of a feudal castle, on the donjon of which floats a standard; a page picks up the lances broken by the champions, and two mounted heralds sound their trumpets and accompany the assault at arms with their music. It is not necessary to remark upon the fire, dash, and spirit Rubens has imparted to these figures, which are put in with all the vivacity of a sketch; but what is peculiarly admirable is the landscape, an ideally romantic landscape, the harmony of the heaven, the waters, the ground, the trees, the fortress, bathed in airy, warm, transparent colour. In this marvellous painting nature does not seem to have been copied, but rather invented and created, so to speak, by the painter, in so masterly a manner does he handle its elements. Every great artist thus composes for himself a world in which everything is harmonious: the background and the figures, man and the landscape, the drapery and the body, the form and the colour, are made one, for they could not be separated without a discord, and from this *ensemble* springs an admirable harmony in which inaccuracies and failures of detail vanish. Two other landscapes, which have no particular name, are no less fine. In one, blazes the orb of the setting sun; in the other, the rainbow is

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outspread, and magic of colour has never been carried farther.

"The Kermess" exhibits the very genius of Rubens, rid of all allegorical and mythological constraint, revelling freely in Flemish joy and drunkenness. But do not fear that he shall become, as he sits by a pot of frothing beer, a peaceful and phlegmatic Teniers. When Rubens plays he is as formidably gay as a Titan, and he paints a dance of topers with as much power as a fall of angels or the damned into hell. He has seized upon the staggering crowd in front of the tavern door and linked it into one immense chain which turns like a drunken zodiac in a mad round, with intertwined arms, hands clinging to hands, an incredible variety of attitudes and contortions, heavy feet marking the time and raising a warm fog of dust. The thing is full of life and turbulence; it is an exhibition of joyous bestiality. The red cheeks of the plump gammers are full of health; the robust lads rummage among the opulent charms of the fat females; every one has to dance, even the old women, and the round sings and swings on breathlessly with mad cries, shouts, and songs. It is ignoble yet superb, for it is a Bacchanal painted by a genius.

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Jordaëns deserves to be called a great master. He has not the lofty flight of Rubens, but he possesses fertility, vigour, and an excess of form and colour which are recognised at the first glance. His life was very quiet, and he never left his native country. He is Fleming to the backbone. The drawing of his figures is often more violent than that of Rubens, and the colouring on his palette is more intense in degree. His contours burst with plethora, his stuffs flame and blaze, the cheeks of his figures seem to be alight; but what mighty harmony, what splendid accord, what consistent warmth, what rich *impasto;* what a superb handling of the brush, and what masterly surety of touch! Undoubtedly he is often coarse, trivial, and ignoble; he has no idea of choosing types; he takes nature as he finds her; sometimes with a sort of brutal joviality, he makes her uglier through fondness for character. But he is none the less a great painter, and to prove this, it is enough to look in the Salon Carré at the "Childhood of Jupiter," with the marvellous back of the woman in it, or in the Gallery at the "Jesus Driving the Sellers from the Temple," a painting impetuous and proud in mien in spite of a few comic episodes after the Flemish manner; "The Four Evangelists," a fine, strong study;

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"The King Drinks;" a joyous "Family Festival" in which hilarity laughs out in good wine and good cheer; and the "Concert after the Meal," a composition frankly grotesque, in which all the personages, sitting around a table covered with the débris of an abundant supper, are playing, some on flutes, some on flageolets, some on the bagpipes, led by an an old fellow who beats time upon a pot; the young women sing at the top of their voices, their children in their arms; even the grandmother in her wickerwork arm-chair, on top of which an owl is perched, tries to help with a sheet of music in her hand. It is almost a caricature, but the energetic execution makes of this buffoon scene a work of art.

David Teniers, called the Younger, created for himself a small world in which he reigns as a master. In vain did Louis XIV say with disdainful contempt, "Take away these grotesques;" museums, galleries and amateurs have none the less fought over the works of the good Flemish painter. There is a peculiar charm in the taverns in which peasants are smoking with pots of beer by their side, and maids, teased by rustic gallants, pass by carrying dishes or flagons; in which, in a warm shadow sparkling with luminous spots, shine

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the well polished kitchen utensils; in the laboratories of alchemists filled with mattresses, siphons, retorts, stills, and all the cabalistic stuff which forms the usual furniture of such gentry; in the Temptations of St. Anthony; in the heron hunts, — in all the subjects of familiar life in the representation of which Teniers excels. No one better rendered the aspect of Flanders with its light-gray, humid sky, its fresh verdure, its brick houses with their crowfoot gables, its roofs with their storks' nests, its canals filled with brownish waters, its noisy guard-rooms, its hospitable taverns, its sturdy peasants with sly, sarcastic faces, and its good little dumpling-like women. Amid this rusticity Teniers sometimes shows the turrets of a lordly habitation, for if he painted common things it was from the window of a château. David Teniers is not, as people too frequently fancy, an artist whose principal merit lies in the finish of his work; no one painted in broader, lighter, or more rapid fashion. Most of his smaller paintings, now worth their weight in gold, were dashed off in the course of an afternoon. His golden, transparent colouring, which is kept within a scale of reds and tender grays, is laid on in broad masses brought out by two or three piquant touches and by clever splash

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lights. A touch of light, a half-tint, a reflection, and you have an earthen-ware jar, a glass bottle, which seem painted with excessive care; the exact effect is obtained with very little trouble. It is the same way with his figures, which are brought out by flat tints with the swiftness and certainty of a great artist. Rubens, Van Dyke, and Teniers were in their lifetime the most famous painters in Flanders, and posterity has confirmed their title to that rank. No doubt Teniers had not a very high ideal, but such as it was he has thoroughly realised it.

The Louvre possesses a fairly large number of paintings by this clever, realistic painter. It is needless to describe them, for they all possess the same elements varied in the most ingenious way; and when appreciating Tenier's talent, I stated the usual motives of his compositions. Sometimes, however, he attempted historical or sacred subjects, and indulged in anachronisms of costume as freely as Paolo Veronese: he was quite capable of putting artillery in a Siege of Troy, and a pipe in the mouth of swift-footed Achilles. So the Prodigal Son, seated at a table with courtesans, wears a plumed hat, a fashionable mantle, and has laid his sword upon a footstool. The courtesans, peaceful Flemish

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women, are dressed in the fashion of the seventeenth century, and in the background is a steeple surmounted by a weathercock, which is not particularly biblical. But the parable of the Prodigal Son belongs to every generation. His "Works of Mercy" contain in a single picture all the meritorious acts which Christian charity can inspire; the composition is ingenious and the execution piquant; but Teniers is plainly more at his ease in his little world of smokers and topers.

The Italians did not indulge much in landscapes, they were too preoccupied with man to pay much attention to what we now call nature. Michael Angelo may be said never to have looked at it, and in the works of the other artists of the Peninsula, landscape is used merely to bring out the figures and to give them movement. Titian, without paying special attention to it, painted admirable landscapes, but landscape painting in itself was not a separate art, having a value of its own. It was in the gray climate of the North, under sad skies often shrouded in fog, that the feeling for nature was developed in dreamy contemplations.

Ruysdaël painted melancholy landscapes entirely free from history and mythology, in which man appeared only

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as an accessory, in his real proportions. He painted forests without nymphs, in which, under the shady foliage, travel a peasant or an old woman carrying fagots; great trees bending under the autumn wind, and gray skies filled with clouds, heavy with rain; dishevelled bushes on the top of sandy hillocks; foaming torrents dashing against stones or the overthrown trunks of trees; dykes and stockades of piles beaten by the yellow waters of the North Sea, with a sail bending to the blast in the distance. Who was the master of this wonderful landscape-painter? Perhaps Berghem, or rather Everdingen, if not directly by his lessons, at least by his influence. In any case, it was Nature. Ruysdaël, whose life remains obscure in spite of research, scarcely left the neighbourhood of Amsterdam, or at most made short excursions to Germany and Switzerland; but there is no need to travel to be a great artist, — all that is necessary is to put one's soul into surrounding nature.

Pieter de Hooge appears to have fixed upon the white walls of his interiors the few sunbeams that shine in Holland. No one has painted light more powerfully or with a greater art of illusion. On looking at his pictures, one is tempted to believe that they

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are lighted by a real sunbeam. Decamps has borrowed from him that sunny, white, luminous mist that marks with its brilliant zones the fresh, vaporous, transparent, bluish half-tints of peaceful interiors; but Decamps obtains his effects with more effort than Hooge, who is always simple, true, and natural. A passageway lighted by a south window; an apartment in which filters a sunbeam; maids busied with their daily cares, or ladies playing cards with cavaliers who raise a glass full of transparent liquor, — that is all he needs to make a masterpiece, as is proved by the two paintings signed by him which are in the Louvre.

Philip Wouvermans is a delightful painter, and although he confined himself to a somewhat limited range of subjects, his power of invention, his fine observation, the harmony of his colouring, and his characteristic delicacy of touch are worthy of admiration. Philip Wouvermans was what would now be called a painter of sports. The Louvre has by him "The Departure for the Chase," "The Hawking Party," "The Stag Hunt," "The Stable," "Halt of Huntsmen and Horsemen before an Inn," "Cavalry Engagement," "Military Halt," etc. The horse, it will be observed, always occupies a very important

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place in Wouvermans' compositions. He excels in the representation of elegant country-house life. On a rich balustraded stair he places the lady of the house in a satin or velvet riding-dress, her hackney held in hand by a page, and young lords, upright in their saddles, bowing to her. In one corner of the painting you will always find, as if it were the painter's signature, the silvery white quarters of a horse. Although this artist died quite young and painted a great deal, his pictures are always very carefully finished, with a masterly rich, supple finish.

The ideal of the Dutch and Flemish schools alike was the imitation of nature, but in both the temperament of the painter determined the choice of the model. A silver vase is as real as an earthen-ware pot, a rose is not less true than a cabbage, and if there are smoky taverns with yellow windows, full of rustic topers, there are also many fine interiors with great mantel-pieces, with marble pillars, velvet arm-chairs, tables covered with Turkey carpets, hangings of Bohemian leather, Venetian mirrors shimmering in the shadow, and handsome ladies in silk skirts and velvet jackets playing cards or listening to cavaliers who reach out for a long, thin-stemmed glass which a page

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fills with Canary wine. Terburg is one of the artists who love to represent this sumptuous Dutch life, so calm, so restful, and so comfortable. His figures have great freedom of gait and movement. They lived, and they still live, thanks to the magic of his art. Terburg expresses, with a touch at once broad and even, faces, dresses, furniture, and accessories; better than any he renders the luminous sparkle and the shimmering shadows of satin. He is very fond of that precious stuff, and puts a skirt of it on almost every woman whom he has painted. The "Soldier offering gold to a Young Woman," with his long hair, his cuirass and his great jack-boots, is the most perfect type of *ritter* imaginable. He does not reckon on his elegance and his good looks to have his way with the young girl, who may be supposed, without slandering her, to belong to the demi-monde of 1650. Terburg, exceptional among the painters of his country, knew how to paint young and graceful women, with a rosy Dutch pallor over which floats the changing shadow of long golden hair. How charming, with her little artless air and head-dress of bows of ribbons, her straw-coloured jacket and her white satin skirt, is the musician in "The Concert," who sings and beats time! And the pupil in "The

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Music Lesson" is very pretty too; one might be anxious about the teacher's heart if he were Italian or French instead of Dutch. Terburg is not only a painter of familiar scenes, he was also a remarkable portrait painter, and in his composition, "The Congress at Münster," he has produced a perfect historical painting by dint of simple gravity, of serious naturalness, and of exact observation.

Gaspar Netscher was the pupil of Terburg, and learned from him to paint satin to perfection. That was not the only thing he learned, however, for he is a charming master. His "Singing Lesson" and his "Music Lesson" are exquisitely finished works.

Dutch patience and cleanliness carried to the utmost mark Gerard Dow's talent, and it would scarcely be supposed, to look at his paintings, that he spent three years in Rembrandt's studio. This is at least a proof of the independence which the fiery artist allowed to his pupils. The excessive finish which society people and certain amateurs are so fond of did not destroy in Dow's work the general effect, and every object, though treated minutely, keeps its proper value. There is even in "The Dropsical Woman," his masterpiece, a feeling, an expression of grief and of

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sympathy, admirably rendered, although the artist is not usually dramatic in his calm, polished, finished work. The Louvre possesses several pictures by this painter, excellent in quality and perfect in preservation. Dow liked to place his figures within the framework of a window. "The Village Shop," "The Cook," the "Woman Hanging up a Fowl," and "The Trumpeter" are so placed. Within the stone border the painter groups around the figure all the accessories which relate to it: pots, urns, stew-pans, kettles, vegetables, fowls, baskets, carpets, curtains, — all painted with marvellous finish and accuracy. The "Portrait of the Artist," painted by himself, is also seen through the embrasure of a window. Let me mention "The Money Changer," "The Dentist," and the "Reading of the Bible," which contains the portraits of the painter's father and mother. The pious reading is merely a pretext for the representation of a Dutch interior with its world of details. The old woman, seated by the window, reads from the holy book to an old man sitting in front of her. On a stool covered with a napkin is placed a dish of fish; above the cupboard with its shining panels, a crucifix extends its ivory arms; a copper vase and onions lie on the ground near

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the spinning-wheel; in the background can be made out a ladder and a barrel; from the ceiling hang a cage and a drapery, one end of which falls over a beam.

Gabriel Metsu, for thus it is he signs his name, must be reckoned among the cleverest artists of the Dutch school. His drawing is accurate and true, his colour harmonious, his touch free and easy. Every stroke of the brush, laid on exactly right, expresses a form, and it is not by polishing and repolishing that he attains his finish. The Louvre possesses one masterpiece by him, "The Grass Market at Amsterdam." It is not a heroic subject, but the most commonplace nature, when a man understands it and renders it, will produce remarkable paintings. The scene is a square in Amsterdam, shaded with great trees, and at the back brick houses and a canal with boats. The composition is very animated: on one hand peasants wheeling provisions in barrows; on the other, women who, while listening to the conversation of their gallants, are bargaining for vegetables and fowls; farther on, gossips quarrelling, their arms akimbo; dogs barking at cocks perched on wicker-work cages, and old women, Hebes of the public squares, pouring out drink to drunkards. The whole thing is lively, amazingly well preserved,

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and painted with rare power. The "Officer visited by a Young Lady" and "The Music Lesson" are in the elegant style of Terburg and Netscher; but "The Alchemist," "A Dutch Woman," and "A Dutch Cook" belong to the familiar style without any particular subject, in which accessories dominate, and the chief merit of which consists in the technical perfection of the work. Art is such an admirable thing that it can make interesting objects that we should not look at in nature, — kitchen utensils, bundles of onions, bowls, earthenware pots, game, fish, and fowls plucked by a kitchen wench.

Franz Mieris the elder is another of the painters who excel in representing the familiar life of Holland, with its comfort, its luxury, and its minute cleanliness. His paintings, of small dimensions and excessively finished like those of Dow, are well suited to adorn rich apartments with coloured marble mantelpieces, walls hung with Flanders tapestry or Bohemian leather, tables covered with Turkish carpets, brass chandeliers as resplendent as the seven-branched candlesticks of the synagogues. The "Woman Dressing," "The Tea," the "Flemish Family," combine skilfully those elements of composition by the aid of which the brush

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of Dutch masters has produced so many charming pictures.

Wilhelm van Mieris imitates his father, who was his master also, as well as he can, and one looks with pleasure upon "Soap Bubbles," "The Game Dealer," and "The Cook," through the window in which they are framed.

The Dutch painters were not all dandies, painting cavaliers in jack-boots and handsome ladies in satin skirts; many of them never walked up to the drawing-room, but stopped at the tavern on the corner or at the inn on the road; they are none the less important on this account. In art, rags are as good as velvet, a smoky den as a splendid palace, and a toper with his horse-laugh as a dandy showing off his graces as a peacock shows off its tail. Certainly Adrian van Ostade is not the painter of beauty. He has painted only horrible little fellows, squat, commonplace, heavy, smoking their pipe or drinking their can of beer in brown-walled interiors lighted by leaden-trellised windows; or seated on benches shaded by hop-vines at the door of inns, while listening to a travelling minstrel or a hurdy-gurdy player. But his movement is so exact, his tone is so fine, the atmosphere is so ambient, the whole

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scene is so full of rustic and popular life, that one takes singular pleasure in looking at these paintings. Ostade managed to evolve poetry out of vulgarity, and to exhibit its real meaning. He clothes these trivial scenes with a rich sober colour, with a home-like comfort, a secret joviality; he makes you desire to dwell in one of those huts sleeping in brown shadow, where the crackling fire sparkles under the vast mantel of the chimney. "The Family of Adrian van Ostade" exhibits the painter holding his wife by the hand among their daughters and children, grouped in an interior which betokens comfort. "The Schoolmaster" is an amusing composition painted cleverly and artlessly, and animated by the comic episodes of a village school. The "Lawyer in His Office" is interesting through the attentive appearance of the man who holds the papers, and by the curious details always so well treated by the Dutch painters. "The Interior of a Hut," "The Fish-Market," "The Smoker" (called also "The Joyous Old Man"), exhibit Adrian van Ostade in the true region of his talent, and are in their way little masterpieces.

It is not always a piece of good fortune to be the brother or son of a famous man. Even if one is capa-

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ble of shining elsewhere, one disappears in the too great nearness to glory. Such was the case of Isaac van Ostade, the brother of Adrian. He also had much talent, and under another name would have easily made a reputation for himself. Occasionally his paintings are mistaken for those of his brother, his best especially. Yet when he chooses, he has a touch of his own, and renders a particular aspect of Holland. Besides his halts at the doors of inns, and his drinking scenes, he has painted winter scenes: canals frozen between their flat banks, or under a gray sky, rayed by the runners of sleighs and by skaters; with a few good people sliding, one foot in the air, horses drawing barrels, wood or straw, and on the horizon the outlines of steeples, hamlets, and windmills. These paintings, full of observation of nature and cleverness, give one a real understanding of Holland.

Brauwer, and Craesbeke his pupil and companion in debauchery, painted guard-room and smoking-room scenes with a free touch and a warm colour. Rubens thought very highly of Brauwer's talent, and tried to lift him out of the life of debauch he led; but the independent rascal preferred to the palace of the sumptuous artist the tavern and the back-shop of his friend

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the baker Craesbeke, where, we may believe, it was not bread that was mostly consumed. Such dissolute lives, ending in a precocious and wretched death, suggest the saddest reflections, but painting sometimes prefers thorough-paced scamps to industrious and very well-behaved people.

No school was ever more fertile. One name comes after another, every one famous, every one significant, every one marking an original and peculiar talent; and I am far from having exhausted the list. My account cannot be as long as the Louvre gallery, and it is difficult for me to find even a small space for each one, though I should give but a word to a work calling for a long paragraph. I yet have to speak of painters of landscape, marines, perspectives of interiors and views of towns, portraits, flowers, nature, — a whole army, a list that would fill a volume.

Ruysdaël, whose talent I have already praised, is unquestionably the greatest landscape painter in Holland, and a great artist also is Mindert Hobbema. After his death, the exact date of which is not known, the reputation of that painter, who must have been appreciated during his lifetime, suffered, no one knows why, a long eclipse. He was forgotten in all his work and reap-

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peared in sales only in 1739, and then his paintings, for which extravagant sums are now paid, were not in the least prized, and sold for a mere trifle. Often, in order to give them a fictitious value, the signature was effaced and that of painters more in vogue was substituted; Ruysdaël's, for instance, whom he is not unlike, or Dekker. His work, thus rechristened, mingled little by little with that of other artists, and authentic Hobbemas have become excessively rare. At the famous Patureau sale the "Windmills" was sold for a hundred thousand francs. Hobbema lacks Ruysdaël's poetry, but he has a deep feeling for nature, and renders admirably the vigorous life of the forest. His old oaks, with their knotty trunks, their powerful branches, their thick foliage, are full of sap, and his underbrush, through which travel woodcutters or peasant women, is full of the moist freshness of Holland. Such is the painting admired at the Louvre. To this unique specimen has been added recently a small replica of the "Windmills," which shows that Hobbema could paint buildings equally as well as trees. His brick, plaster, and wooden buildings are as solid as Van der Meer's.

Hobbema is robust, Winants is fine and delicate. "The Forest Edge," and the "Landscape," the figures

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and animals in which are put in by Van de Velde, are marked by delicacy of tone, lightness of touch, and accuracy of the brush. Winants loves to give to his foliage and sward a certain verdigrised tint which contrasts happily with the yellow of the sandy ground and the pearly gray of the sky through which here and there glimmers a bit of azure. The second landscape, in which is a horseman preceded by a valet carrying falcons, is less complicated in its composition and strikes me as the most remarkable of Winants' three paintings.

Adrian Van de Velde, who painted figures and animals in his master's landscapes, performed the same service for Van der Heyden, Hobbema, Moucheron, and many others. He painted landscapes and marines in a simple, natural, and true way, and needed no assistance to adorn them with figures. His colouring is clear, limpid, and laid on in broad masses. The Louvre possesses by him the "Shore at Scheveningen," along which drives the Prince of Orange in a carriage drawn by six white horses; three landscapes with animals; a "Herdsman's Family," and "A Frozen Canal." But whatever merit Adrian Van de Velde may have, he must yield precedence to his brother Wilhelm Van de Velde. Wilhelm is an excellent

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marine painter. He reproduces the dull Northern sky reflected in gray waters, on which slip as between two mists the huge men-of-war with their carved forecastles, the *koffs* with their great red sails, and the boats swept by rowers. The Louvre possesses two pictures by Wilhelm Van de Velde, a "Marine" and a "Dutch Fleet at Anchor," which exhibit very satisfactorily the master's manner, although the latter painting is somewhat worn.

If Wilhelm Van de Velde excels in painting marines, Ludolf Backhuysen delights in tempestuous effects, storm scenes, and sails bowed by the wind. He studied the storm and the fury of the ocean, and often, at the risk of his life, ventured out in a small boat in order to get a better knowledge of the raging seas and the breaking of the foam. But his dash and his desire for dramatic effects do not destroy his accuracy and precision; his ships are by no means fanciful vessels; the shipbuilder and the sailor would have nothing to criticise in their build and rigging. Backhuysen, who began by being a mere caligraphist, draws his rigging with as sure a hand as his caligraphic ornaments, and in the disorder of the elements he never commits the smallest nautical error.

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If Venice has Canaletto, Amsterdam has Van der Heyden, her faithful portraitist; Van der Heyden, the painter of canals and houses with denticulated roofs, churches with curious steeples, city halls, and pumping stations. Van der Heyden's paintings are like landscapes seen in a camera obscura: the same general harmony, the same softness of aspect, with individual detail which in no wise detracts from the *ensemble*, so perfectly is everything in its place. In the red brick façades every joint is visible, but the effect of the broad and simple mass is preserved. It is scarcely possible for perfection to go farther in this respect. The "View of the City Hall at Amsterdam," "The Dam Square," the "Church and Square of a Dutch Town," the "Village on the Banks of a Canal," are wonders of truthfulness, colour, and finish. The figures in boats, which Adrian and Wilhelm Van de Velde put into these perfect paintings, further increase their value.

Pieter Neefs has his own somewhat narrow specialty, in which he has scarcely any rivals: he devoted himself to painting the interiors of Gothic churches with great accuracy of perspective and a remarkable cleanness of touch. He might be reproached with a

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certain hardness of line and dryness of detail which somewhat spoil the effect; the architect occasionally troubles the painter by refusing to sacrifice anything. These perfect views lack something of the vagueness and mystery, of the religious awe, which one feels under the high arches of cathedrals. Eight or ten paintings by Neefs, the most important of which is "Saint Peter delivered from Prison," are found in the Louvre.

The Dutch school does not follow a single ideal. Every artist has cut out for himself a domain in a corner of nature which he cultivates assiduously. Van der Neer took for the subjects of his paintings moonlights, sunsets, and winter effects. He knew how to cast upon the sleeping waters of a canal the ruddy reflections of evening or the silvery trail of the moon, whose disc, veiled by light clouds, shines from behind the slender branches of trees; the outline of a village topped by a steeple; he knew how to blend, by the use of mysterious, vaporous half-tints, the forms of objects dimly seen in the night. His soft touch suits this kind of subjects. "The Banks of a Dutch Canal" and "The Road through the Village" represent, in the Louvre, the two notes of Van der Neer, the red and the blue.

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Up to this time I have spoken merely of the painters on the spot, who did not forsake the *polders* and the *campine*. But Flanders and Holland also had their travelling artists, their "Romans," as were then called those who had returned from a pilgrimage to Italy. Among them are artists of real merit; but I prefer to them, as more savoury, the painters who were satisfied with the types, the nature, and the taste of their own country. Italy, with its brilliant light, its mat colour, and its clean drawing often upset those who went there to seek inspiration which they could have found at home amid surroundings better suited to their temperament. This is particularly true of painters of *genre* and landscape. Karel du Jardin was one of those lovers of Italy. He spent a great part of his adventurous existence in that country. He preferred Venice to his native city of Amsterdam, and came back to it to die after having been in Rome, one of the brotherhood of the joyous academic band, and having married in France, at Lyons. The Louvre possesses a very admirable "Calvary" by him, a well-composed painting, well drawn, and of good colour. But if the true Karel du Jardin be sought for, he is to be found in the "Italian Charlatans," in the Punchinello who puts his head

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through the canvas of the tent, in the Scaramouch who shows off his grotesque poses upon planks supported on barrels, while Harlequin at the foot of the platform tickles a guitar to make it laugh. Men, women, and children listen with open mouths to the jokes of the buffoon, and a small boy, perched on the back of a richly harnessed mule, is, as it were, as in a stage-box. A warm, joyous, bright colour fills this grotesque scene, to which the clever touch of the painter imparts great value. "The Ford" recalls Italy by the bareness of the mountains and the brilliancy of the light. In the "Pasturage," "The Wood," and the three landscapes with animals, Karel has returned to the green trees and fresh grass of Holland.

Jan Both, who is called Italian Both, is another of the fugitives attracted beyond the Alps by the sunshine, and who did not return to their nest. Both, a great admirer of Claude Lorraine, studied him carefully and sought to win the secret of the golden light that fills his pictures. He delights in representing roads winding among trees, rocks and the inequalities of the ground towards some distant town, or some rocky valley lighted from the side by the beams of the setting sun. Such are the two pictures in the Louvre.

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Andreas, Jan's brother, put cleverly painted figures after the manner of Pieter Van Laer, into his brother's landscapes, and they often painted together with equal talent. It is difficult to tell where Andreas begins and where Jan ends.

Although born in Antwerp, Paul Bril can scarcely be considered a Flemish painter. He had become so thoroughly Italianised that several of his paintings are signed Paolo Brilli. He died at Rome, whither he had gone to join his brother Matthew, an excellent landscape painter whose pupil he was and whom he surpassed. His landscapes, grandly composed, though sometimes of a somewhat crude green, serve as backgrounds to mythological scenes. In one are Diana and her Nymphs, in another Pan and Syrinx, in a third Saint Jerome accompanied by his lion and kneeling before a crucifix in a site arid enough for any hermit. All are ornamented with figures more important than the sticks which generally break the solitude of landscapes. The Italian taste prevails in these paintings.

Pynacker also went to Italy, and on his return to Holland he painted for mansions and rich dwellings great panels with a light touch, in which he turned to account the studies of ruins, antique monuments, and

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picturesque sites which he had made during his trip. Most of these decorative paintings have vanished with the buildings they adorned, and all that is left of Pynacker are a few paintings of small dimensions, landscapes brightened by animals and figures painted very cleverly.

I should never be done, if I attempted to give a complete list of all these vagabonds of art, and I am compelled to omit the dynasty of the Breughels, Peasant Breughel, Velvet Breughel, and Hell Breughel, original and striking painters, the best known of whom is Velvet Breughel, with his landscapes vanishing into an ideal azure distance, and in which all the animals in paradise, painted with exquisite delicacy of touch and marvellous brilliancy of colour, fill the foreground.

Dietrich imitated Rembrandt, his favourite master, as regards the character of his figures, the style of architecture and costumes, and the dark brown tone of the colour; but of course he is far behind his prototype, for the servant walks behind the master, as Michael Angelo used to say. Nevertheless Dietrich is a meritorious painter whose works were formerly much more sought after than now. "The Woman Taken in Adultery" is conceived in the taste of Rembrandt: the

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Christ speaking to the Pharisees, the fallen woman standing before him in an attitude of humility, the pillars of the Temple connected by galleries, recall some of the etchings of the master.

As yet I have said nothing of animal painters. Paul Potter, who died at the age of twenty-nine, and who as early as fourteen was producing masterpieces, is a painter of the first order, whose works the richest museums fight over. He painted horses, oxen and sheep only, but how naturally, how truthfully, with what life and with what marvellous execution! An ox lying in the grass, a cow snuffing the air with her wet nostrils, a horse drinking, a dog barking, with a background of meadow and gray sky against which stands out a tree or a hut, — he needed no more to make a picture now worth its weight in gold. Paul Potter is the perfection of simplicity.

Albert Cuyp, so much sought after to-day, did not enjoy a great reputation during his lifetime, and his paintings were sold very cheap. He was too simple and too true, his execution too broad, his naïve compositions did not have the piquancy which strikes the blasé taste of the amateur. In several respects his manner is much that of the brothers Le Nain, so long

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unappreciated in France; but his colour is warmer and his palette is not so closely confined to gray tones. "The Departure" represents a horseman, dressed in red, upon a dappled-gray horse; a servant hands him the bridle and holds his stirrup; another horseman, dressed in black, comes out from a low door, and two dogs in the foreground await the start. "The Promenade" is a similar subject, with three horsemen, one of whom takes partridges offered him by a gamekeeper accompanied by two dogs. A "Portrait of a Man," a "Portrait of a Child," and a "Marine" testify to the flexibility of Cuyp's talent.

Berchem's fertility is amazing, and yet in no wise impairs the perfection of his paintings. It is due to great assiduity and infallible certainty of execution. Berchem varied infinitely a small number of themes, and his variations are always pleasant. "Crossing the Ford," "The Ford," "A Meadow," "A Landscape with Animals," constantly reappear under his brush, yet never weary, so limpid is his colour, so clever his touch and so ingeniously does he mingle animals and people. Berchem treats himself from time to time to a pretty girl seated upon an ass's paniers, or picking up her skirts to cross a brook.

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If all these artists painted living animals well, Weenix painted still life admirably. How superb are his white-bellied hares with tawny backs, hanging up, or put in the centre of a trophy of game! What a palette he possessed when he rendered the green-gold, the lapis-lazuli of the plumage of the peacock and the ocellated splendour of their tails!

Admirable portrait painters were Van der Helst and Franz Hals. They figure honourably by the side of Rembrandt, Rubens, and Van Dyck.

Now after looking so long at these small paintings, wonders of finish, we may look up and admire the austere paintings of Philippe de Champagne, the Jansenist Poussin: "The Feast at the House of Simon the Pharisee," "Christ Celebrating the Last Supper with His Disciples," "The Crucified Christ," and especially that singular and characteristic painting in which is seen Sister Saint Susannah, the daughter of Philippe de Champagne, seated, her feet extended upon a footstool, her hands joined, while Mother Catherine Agnes Arnauld on her knees prays for the cure of the sick woman, who, as a matter of fact, was restored to health, as the inscription upon the painting states. Once that picture has been seen, Port-Royal is as

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thoroughly known as if one had read Sainte-Beuve's voluminous work. Admirable, also, are the portraits of the Cardinal Duke Armand de Richelieu, and that of the woman of bloodless pallor, dressed in maroon and wearing a black gauze veil, who is supposed to be Mme. Arnauld, the sister of Nicolas Arnauld and whose daughter was Mother Angélique. Terrifying indeed is that mask in its dead whiteness, animated by no living feeling.

The portraits, by Porbus, of Henry IV and Catherine of Medici are historical documents. Their absolute sincerity tells more about the persons represented than the best informed of chronicles and the most detailed of memoirs.

In this portion of the gallery Van Dyck reigns supreme, without fearing the nearness of Rubens. No less a colourist, and finer and more delicate than his master, Van Dyck seems to have been born to paint kings, princesses, duchesses, — all that society of the upper world, high-bred, aristocratic, of hereditary magnificence, that passes above the multitude as gods pass over clouds. He has painted with an easy, noble touch, with a brilliant and vigorous colouring, and a rapid penetration of character in the short sittings

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which the great give, heads that will never again be seen, masks the mould of which has been broken, expressions of existence forever vanished. Van Dyck is the true painter of aristocracy, as is proved by the galleries of Genoa and Windsor. He himself, as may be seen by his portrait, had the cavalier grace, the quick, careless look of the man of the world. I need not speak again of the "Portrait of Charles I;" but merely mention the magnificent equestrian "Portrait of Francis de Moncada," Marquis d'Ayona, Generalissimo of the Spanish troops in the Low Countries, which is worthy of Titian and Velasquez; the "Children of Charles I," — the Prince of Wales, the Duke of York and the Princess Mary; "Charles Louis, Prince of Bavaria," "Prince Rupert, in armour," "The Duke of Richmond," and "A Lady and Her Daughter," marvellous paintings full of life and colour, and of an elegance which no painter possessed to the same degree.

Van Dyck's immense reputation as a portrait painter makes people forget somewhat that he is an excellent historical painter, and that he showed great superiority in historical and mythological subjects. He often equals his master Rubens. If he possesses less bril-

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liancy and energy, he has more elegance, tenderness, and taste. "The Virgin and Child," the "Christ Mourned by the Virgin and Angels," "Venus asking for Arms for Aeneas," "Rinaldo and Armida," are paintings of the first order, as remarkable for their composition and drawing as for their colour. Van Dyck did not lose himself in Rubens' genius, but preserved undeniable originality.

I have been obliged to omit many an artist of worth, eclipsed by the glory of Rubens as stars by the sun, Otto Venius, Crayer, and many others; I have often had merely to mention a few smaller masters who are the joy and delight of amateurs, and I have had to give up the hope of following out to the end that form of art which had for its tomb Van Huysum's "Tulip."

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IX
THE FRENCH SCHOOL

AT the end of the gallery we turn to the right and enter a room in which are collected a few paintings of the old French school, most undeservedly little known. France has always had painters, yet men often went to seek elsewhere what they had at home. Jean Cousin is represented in this room by his "Last Judgment," a vast composition which, by the vigour of the conception, the variety of the groups, and the knowledge of anatomy recalls Michael Angelo. In the foreground, angels bearing scythes, the reapers of Death, carry away from their furrows sheaves of the dead that start up at the sound of the last trump. The elect proceed towards the celestial Jerusalem; the lost are hurled down, driven by demons into the black caverns of hell, or run hither and thither to avoid their chastisement. Ruined castles and destroyed cities show that the end of the world has come. In the upper part of the painting Christ ap-

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pears in glory, His feet resting on a globe, surrounded by angels, apostles, saints, and blessed. His pose is severe, majestic, and terrible; the Saviour is now the Judge. It is certainly the work of a great painter, and yet we possess but few details concerning his life; all that is known is that it was very long. What has become, then, of the numerous masterpieces of an artist who lived nearly eighty-nine years? His authentic works are exceedingly rare; almost all have disappeared or have been destroyed. The only oil painting left by him is this "Last Judgment." Like all the great artists of the Renaissance, Cousin was an encyclopædic genius. He excelled in stained glass, as is proved by the stained-glass windows of many churches and cathedrals. He was also a sculptor, and his statue for the mausoleum of Philippe de Chabot, who was taken prisoner at Pavia with Francis I, shows that he was as skilful with his chisel as with his brush. What, then, did Cousin lack to occupy before posterity the rank which is his? A biographer, — a Vasari.

François Clouet is an exquisite master, a delicate, graceful, elegant Holbein, with all his own French qualities in addition. His manner is most refined, and the most finished miniatures would show coarse by

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the side of his work. His colours are clear, his shadows extremely light, as if he feared their concealing some interesting detail; but when the eye gets accustomed to the pale tone, it perceives wonderful modelling, an admirable touch, and great precision. Clouet's paintings look like low-relief medals, on which one can easily make out the relief, and which produce the effect of high relief. Then he exhibits such care, taste, finish, and accuracy in the costumes, ornaments, arms, and gems of the illustrious personages, princes, or princesses, whom he has painted! He sacrifices nothing, conceals nothing; yet in the mass of details not one stands out so far as to interfere with the harmony. He was truly the painter of the Valois, the artist of kings as fond of dress and as coquettish as women.

A masterpiece indeed is the "Portrait of Elizabeth of Austria," Queen of France and wife of Charles IX. Greater delicacy, accuracy, and perfection of drawing are not to be found. Over the exquisite lineaments is spread a suave pallor which one feels to be the very expression of nature, and which is truer than the loud tones of so-called colourists. Although the model of this charming portrait is now but a handful of ashes, if indeed the ashes still exist, the resemblance is un-

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mistakable. This must be Elizabeth, wife of Charles IX. She lives again in her small frame. Her hands, resting on each other, are most graceful, marvellously slender, transparent, and tender, like lily petals, — regal hands in very truth. The costume, profusely elegant, is covered with pearls, gems, enamelled buttons, and precious stones, under which almost disappears the gold brocade bodice with its silver damask pattern; while the starched ruff and the puffed chemisette seem to challenge the Blaise Desgoffes of the future.

Near by is the "Portrait of Charles IX," no less admirable than that of Elizabeth. That single figure recalls the whole physiognomy of the time, the whole meaning of the reign. No historian's page, even written by Michelet, is as full of information as this small panel. It is indeed the young king, the lover of Marie Touchet, somewhat of a poet, somewhat crazy, a great hunter, and fantastically cruel, whom the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew has marked with a bloody stain. He is actually here, as real as if he were posing before us in his black-velvet doublet trimmed with gold braid, his white satin trunk-hose, his little black toque with white feathers, and his hand resting on the hilt of his sword.

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Portraits of the school of Clouet, "Francis I," "Henry II," "Francis of Lorraine," "Charles de Cossé, Count of Brissac," though similar as far as execution goes, plainly indicate the distance that separates the imitators from the master. There is also a "Portrait of Jean Foucquet," the learned miniaturist of the "Book of Hours" of Master Estienne Chevallier, and another very curious one of the "Duke of Montmorency," with the Greek motto *aplanos*. A few paintings on gold backgrounds, representing devotional subjects, are quite as good as those admired in foreign schools.

There is also in this room a large painting by Martin Fréminet, who worked at Fontainebleau, where he painted the chapel; but his education was completed in Italy, where he became acquainted with Carravaggio and il Cavaliere d'Arpino. The subject of the composition, which is treated in the broad, decorative manner of a painter accustomed to wall-painting, is "Mars urging Æneas to leave Dido." Dido, lying half nude upon a couch, in vain makes use of her seductions; Æneas turns to the god, who is pointing out the way, while a Cupid is fastening his cothurns.

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Gourmont is a strange artist who paints by way of background to his devotional subjects a complicated, mysterious architecture, and quaint perspectives of imaginary monuments. "The Nativity" in the Louvre is a work of this class.

The next room is entirely devoted to Le Sueur, one of the greatest names in the French school. Legend has made of Eustache Le Sueur an unhappy, persecuted genius, a victim to the jealousy of Le Brun, wearing out a sad life in work and poverty, and finally seeking in the cloister the repose which the world refused him. All this commonplace romance, made up for the benefit of sensitive people, has been demolished bit by bit, and Le Sueur none the less remains the tender, chaste genius one sees in his work. He never would go to Rome, but why should he have sought in a distant pilgrimage what he possessed in himself, and, besides, it is not necessary to cross the mountains in order to study the masters.

The "Life of Saint Bruno," painted for the Carthusian Monastery in the Rue d'Enfer, is the most characteristic and popular work of Le Sueur, if not his masterpiece. When Le Sueur's name is mentioned, the "Life of Saint Bruno" is at once thought of.

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The series contains no less than twenty-two paintings, which were placed in the arches formed by the pilasters of the cloister. They are not all by the master himself, for it is said he was helped to complete this important order, but his inspiration is visible in all, and the greatest unity reigns in this gallery of monastic life.

Great indeed is the difference between Le Sueur's monks and Zurbaran's, between the tender piety of the French painter and the grim devotion of the Spanish artist. Le Sueur's monks thought of heaven, Zurbaran's of hell; the former mortified their flesh in order to become more spiritual, the others did it by way of penance. Le Sueur excites emotion, Zurbaran terror. What sombre, terrifying phantasmagoria would not Zurbaran have evoked to represent the death of Raymond Diocres, whom the devil calls for, and for that most dramatic funeral scene, when the body rises from the bier, confessing that it has been righteously condemned. But such savagery would ill suit the tender soul of the French artist, who attaches himself to the moral part of the subject, and attenuates its physical horror. The whole painting is kept down within a pale, soft range of colour in which break out draperies of that intense ultra-marine seen in the paintings of

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Philippe de Champagne, Le Brun, Mignard, and other painters of the day, and which has not suffered from the slow alteration of the other colours. The remarkable thing in this long illustrated legend is the simplicity of the composition, the bringing out of the detail and accessories, the sobriety of the execution, the small number of tones employed, and especially the humble, fervent look of the heads. One is far indeed from "our own day," as the phrase went in that cloistered atmosphere, where nothing worldly enters, where colours fade, and where earth is but a mist, which, as it blows away, reveals heaven. Among these paintings, representing "The Conversion of Saint Bruno at the Death of Diocres," his "Renunciation of the World," the "Apparition of the Angels to the sleeping Saint," "The Foundation of the Monastery," "The Prayer in the Cell," and various other episodes, there is one before which visitors stop admiringly. It is the "Death of Saint Bruno," the masterpiece of Le Sueur, and one of the masterpieces of painting. The saint, upon his deathbed, expires after having publicly confessed himself. A Carthusian, crucifix in hand, deplores with the monks the loss the order has just sustained. At the head and at the foot of the body, four brethren chant

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the prayers for the dead, and another prostrates himself on the floor, overcome with humility and fervour. The light of a single candle casts its pale reflections upon the shroud-like white gowns, upon the white tomb-like walls, upon the bare floor which recalls the planks of a bier; and a penetrating sorrow wells out of this almost monochrome painting.

It would be a mistake to suppose that Eustache Le Sueur is a purely ascetic painter who confined himself to devotional subjects. He possesses a grace which can smile most lovingly in mythological scenes. The paintings of "The Cabinet of Love," for the Hotel Lambert, which are now in the Louvre, exhibit another aspect of his art. It is the story of Cupid, — his birth, his presentation to Jupiter, and the various episodes of his celestial life. Here, reprimanded by his mother, he takes refuge in the arms of Ceres; there he receives the homage of the gods; here again he orders Mercury to announce his power to the world, or else steals the thunder of the master of Olympus. All these pictures are painted in a bright, light, brilliant tone, as is proper in decorative paintings intended for a special place. The character of the heads is charming in its serene gentleness and artless voluptuousness, a reflection of

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which is seen later in the grace of Prud'hon. The forms of the bodies are undulating and supple, in elegant, pure taste, and not stiffened by careful imitation of antiquity.

"The Nine Muses," painted on different panels for the bedroom of Mme. de Thorigny at the Hotel Lambert, that marvellous sanctuary of masterpieces, have, whether looked at together or separately, an inexpressible charm. They are antique and yet thoroughly French, and the lady in them is seen within the goddess; they would be just as much at their ease in a drawing-room as on the summit of Pindus. And yet do not suppose that they are *précieuses;* their poses are most simple and natural, they look gently before them with a vague smile, and are distinguished by the attribute they hold,—a mask, a lyre, tablets,—as if it were a fan with which they were playing carelessly. Their types could be found in the engravings of Sébastien Leclerc. It is a charming sort of antiquity, somewhat modernised as in a tragedy of Racine, softened, sentimental, a well-bred, well-mannered antiquity. But Le Sueur has more than beauty, virginal ingenuousness and a stock of unalterable candour, and although it is plain that his "Muses" were painted under Louis XIV,

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they are none the less the younger sisters of "Poetry," "Theology," and "Justice" which Raphael painted in the tympana and vaultings of the Stanze of the Vatican. Eustache Le Sueur may sit modestly at the feet of the divine Sanzio.

In the same room are paintings by Vouet, Lahire, and Mosnier.

The corridor which joins the new gallery of the French school contains Joseph Vernet's "Views of French Seaports." He was the head of the dynasty of Vernet, the father of Carle and the grandfather of Horace Vernet. I shall not attempt to describe, one after another, those very remarkable views which long remained the models of that particular style. Joseph Vernet is a great artist, and if we cannot admire him quite as much as did Diderot, we still think highly of him. He is no mere marine painter, although he has scarcely any rivals in this respect. He composes a picture marvellously, and that is almost a lost art to-day; while the figures which he introduces into his paintings are drawn freely and correctly, are cleverly brought out, and play their part in the landscape. The "French Seaports" reproduce the active, joyous bustle of life, and the inhabitants of each maritime town are

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marked by their provincial characteristics. Joseph Vernet remained twenty years in Italy, but he did not forget his native country. He followed carefully from afar the successive exhibitions. No painter studied more assiduously atmospheric effects, the changes of light at different times of the day, — dawn, night, sunset or moonlight; and he piqued himself on representing, so that it should be at once recognised, any hour of the day. He paints water limpid, transparent, and mobile; his waves run well into each other and break naturally. His rocks, his bushes, his trees, somewhat in the style of Salvator Rosa, have character and picturesqueness. His luminous colouring changes Claude Lorraine's gold into silver.

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X

GALLERY OF THE FRENCH SCHOOL

THE new French gallery, which the Pavillon Denon separates into two parts, contains, first, the works of the French painters from Louis XIII to Louis XIV, or nearly so, for chronological order has not been followed exactly. Here are seen Poussin, Vouet, Jouvenet, Le Sueur, Le Brun, Sébastien Bourdon, Mignard, Rigaud, Santerre, Valentin, Claude Lorraine, Lahire, de la Fosse, and Lefèvre.

Le Sueur, several of whose paintings I have already described, is largely represented in this gallery. His most important work here is "Saint Paul Preaching at Ephesus." The apostle, standing on the steps of a portico, points to heaven and seems to say that there alone is true knowledge to be found; while the Ephesians bring to the square books on philosophy, history, and art, which they tear and burn as useless or harmful. A kneeling slave blows the fire in a most natural

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way. This painting is one of Le Sueur's masterpieces. It recalls Raphael's cartoons at Hampden Court. "Jesus Bearing his Cross" moves by its sympathetic sadness and deep misery. Christ has fallen under the weight of the cross of shame; He is on his hands and knees; it is time that Simon of Cyrene should come to His help, else Saint Veronica will carry away upon her cloth but the impression of the face of the dead. This simple composition, with its touchingly pale colouring, best represents the genius of Le Sueur.

The Louvre is rich in paintings by Poussin, having no less than thirty-nine works by this austere, laborious, and fruitful master, who may be called the Philosopher of Painting. All his compositions are marked by common-sense, rectitude, and will. If the eye is not always satisfied, reason has never any objection to make. Poussin gains much by being engraved, as do painters who are more careful of thought, composition, and drawing than of the beauty of colour. Occasionally, on seeing paintings of his which have been admired in engravings, one feels a sort of disappointment; for the tones, usually laid over a red ground which has worked through, have assumed a dull, brown look.

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But if one overcomes this first feeling of disappointment, there soon grows out of the faded, neutral colouring as compelling a charm as in certain plays of Corneille, which at first seem wearisome, but whose manly, virile beauty later makes itself felt.

Poussin studied antiquity, Raphael, and Giulio Romano; but although he spent the greater part of his life in Rome and died there, he none the less remained French, and in him thought is superior to feeling. Nature does not attract him directly; he sees little more in forms than a means of expression; his execution is always subordinated to the subject, and he does not revel in the free joy of the artist who paints for the sake of painting. In spite of this, or perhaps because of this, no one better than Poussin deserves the title of great master. He was a great master, if not by temperament, at least by all the noble faculties which may be acquired, which are related to and developed under the control of a strong reason. If he lacks the great style of the Italians, he has accuracy, masterly gravity, and certainty of drawing.

"Eleazar and Rebekah" is one of Poussin's most graceful compositions. In order to please a friend, who had asked him for a picture that should include

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several types of female beauty, he chose the subject of Rebekah going with her companions to draw water from the well for her father's flocks. She receives, with hand pressed to her heart in amazement and delight, the presents offered her by Eleazar. Her companions, women and young girls, exhibit various degrees of surprise, as they gaze upon the unexpected scene. One absent-minded woman lets the water overflow her full pitcher; another, bearing an urn on her head, bends to take a vase from the ground with the most charmingly balanced motion in the world. The draperies are in the purest of taste, the expressions are varied, and I think, though I have not seen it, that Guido's picture, "The Virgin at Work among Young Girls," which suggested to M. Pointel the idea of ordering a similar composition from Poussin, — I doubt, I say, if Guido's is as successful as "Eleazar and Rebekah." When an austere painter chooses to sacrifice to gracefulness, he usually makes a success of it.

I can do no more than name "Moses Drawn from the Waters," "The Child Moses Trampling upon Pharaoh's Crown," "Moses Changing Aaron's Rod into a Serpent," "The Israelites Gathering Manna in the Desert," — the small frescoes by Raphael, drawn

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from the Old Testament and painted on the walls of the Loggie of the Vatican, convey an accurate idea of these; "The Rape of the Sabines," "Young Pyrrhus Saved," two "Holy Families," an "Assumption of the Virgin," "The Ravishment of Saint Paul," which recalls the "Vision of Ezekiel" by Sanzio, and is not unworthy of forming a companion picture to it. Let me come to what may be called the profane side of this serious and grave painter, for Poussin did not disdain to paint mythological subjects and bacchanals; but in his work the fauns and satyrs moderate their spirits, the bacchantes and menads are as chaste as art, even when nude, and their mad round is more a gambol around an antique sarcophagus. The painting called "The Shepherds in Arcadia" renders with melancholy simplicity the brevity of life, and the awakening, in the minds of the young shepherds and maidens, who look at the tomb they have come upon, of the forgotten idea of death. Their faces become pensive under their wreaths of flowers, and leaning upon their crooks, they turn towards the funeral stone and make out the inscription: *Et in Arcadia ego.* Never was any epitaph in the anthology summed up by Meleager in a distich more suave and dainty.

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Poussin symbolised "The Four Seasons" by four subjects drawn from the Bible. Springtime is represented by the Earthly Paradise, the episode of Ruth and Boaz represents Summer, the Israelites bringing back from Canaan the miraculous grapes stand for Autumn; Winter, the most famous of the four compositions, has the Flood for a subject. Unequalled indeed is the cold, sinister horror of this dark painting, in which the rain mingles with the ever-rising flood that whelms a few swimmers clinging desperately to summits that will soon be submerged. It is impossible to produce a greater effect with simpler means. "Orpheus and Eurydice" and "Diogenes casting away his Saucer," hung in the Salon Carré, are perfect models of historical landscape, — that is, of nature subordinated to man, arranged for a scene and composed, as it were, monumentally.

Charles Le Brun does not enjoy the reputation he deserves. The favour of Louis XIV, who is unpopular at present, did him a great deal of harm. He is held responsible for all the paintings of that reign, which, after having been considered greater than it was, is charged with having been more wearisome than it really was. Le Brun was a master possessed of

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rare gifts, — inexhaustible fertility of invention and an amazing power of work. He provided with ideas, sketches, drawings, compositions, a whole army of painters, sculptors, decorators, tapestry makers; he did everything; and in the vast production which he managed, his personal work stands well out. If he lacks Roman drawing and Venetian colouring, he does possess nobility, breadth, pomp, the easy handling of crowds, a thorough understanding of large compositions, a feeling of the proper way to paint ceilings, and a thorough knowledge of decorative painting. His style is his own, his manner is original, and is recognisable at a glance. "The Crossing of the Granicus," "The Battle of Arbela," "Alexander and Porus," "The Entry of Alexander into Babylon," now placed in the Pavillon Denon where the light falls from far too high, are monumental works of which any epoch might be proud. They exhibit a fertility of invention, a grandeur of style, a wealth of incidents, a balance of grouping, a pride of port, and even a fancifulness in the weapons of the barbarians which mark the true master. It may be that the particular kind of drawing and of tone are not to the taste of the spectator, but it cannot be denied that a heroic breath ani-

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mates these great battles. It is bewigged epic, if you will, but it is not every one who can be epic, and in those days Apollo and Alexander had to resemble Louis XIV. There is not so much difference in value as may be supposed between Le Brun's "The Crossing of the Granicus" and Raphael's "Battle of Constantine," painted by Giulio Romano. "The Entry of Alexander into Babylon" is a magnificent composition, the splendour and pomp of which even the Venetians have not surpassed. It is needless to describe these vast paintings, which Audran's engravings have made popular, and which were painted at the Gobelins to serve as designs for tapestries. That they were so intended might be guessed from the fresco tone of the colouring.

Beyond the Pavillon Denon the gallery is prolonged, and continues the charming and clever French school, upon which the revolution brought about by David cast undeserved discredit, and which has now regained all its reputation.

Although Antoine Watteau painted only festivals and subjects drawn from Italian comedy, he is nevertheless a great master. He discovered a new aspect of art and saw nature through a particular kind of

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prism. His drawing, his colour, his types, are all his own; he is original; he possesses grace, elegance, lightness; his art is serious, even if his subjects seem to be frivolous. His work is one perpetual feast, — concerts, balls, gallant conversations, hunting meets, Decamerons in great terraced parks with statues and mythological figures, Mezzotinos serenading Isabellas, Columbines playing with their fans and ogling Leanders, cavaliers helping up fair ladies seated on the sward, — all that a happy imagination can invent of most pleasant and amiable. On seeing these bright, clever paintings so clear in tone, in which the distance is as blue as in the Paradise of Breughel, one is inclined to believe that the artist must have possessed unchanging good humour and a dazzling idea of life. It was not so, however, for Watteau was an invalid and melancholy, saw the dark side of everything, and had no rose colour save on his palette. The Louvre has but one painting by him, his masterpiece, however, "The Embarkation for Cythera."

On the shores of a sea the faint azure of which mingles with that of heaven and of the distance, by a clump of trees with branches as light as feathers, rises a statue of Venus, or rather, a bust of the goddess end-

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ing in a sheath like a Hermes. Garlands of flowers are suspended from it, as well as a bow and quiver. Not far from the goddess, a young woman seated on a bench hesitates about embarking for Cythera. A pilgrim kneeling by her whispers tender urgings in her ear, and a little Cupid with a cape on his shoulder draws her by the skirt of her dress. No doubt he is going on the trip. A cavalier takes by the hands a young beauty seated on the sward, to help her to rise; another leads away his fair, who no longer hesitates, and has slipped his arm around her wasp-like waist. In the middle distance three groups of lovers, their capes on their backs, their staffs in their hands, are proceeding towards the vessel, reached already by two other groups of pilgrims most elegant and coquettish in appearance. How daintily the lady who is about to enter the boat takes up from behind, with a turn of the wrist, the train of her dress! Watteau alone could catch these feminine gestures. The vessel is carved and gilded, and bears at its prow a winged chimera in a fluted shell throwing back its body and its head. It is manned by half-nude rowers, and little Cupids are stretching the awning. Above the vessel, in vaporous cloudlets like silver gauze, flutter, soar, and gambol infant Cupids, one of

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whom waves a torch. These are the chief elements of the composition, and the way the personages are placed. But it is impossible to express in words the tender, vaporous, ideal colouring so well chosen for a dream of youth and happiness, the blending of cool azure and luminous mist in the distance, warmed by golden transparency in the foreground, as true as nature and as brilliant as an operatic apotheosis. Rubens and Paolo Veronese would willingly acknowledge Watteau as their descendant. Undoubtedly the painter of the "Embarkation for Cythera" is the greatest colourist of the French school.

Pierre Subleyras is also a descendant of Paolo Veronese. He has been bidden to the wedding feasts of the illustrious painter. "The Magdalen at the Feet of Jesus in the House of Simon the Pharisee" exhibits the same composition, richness, and development as the great works of Paolo Cagliari. The guests are lying or leaning upon antique couches, and the kneeling Magdalen wipes with her golden hair, as with a golden napkin, the feet of the Christ, who is placed on the left of the painting. In the foreground servants are bringing dishes and amphoræ; a great dog gnaws bones; and at the back, on a huge dresser, stand vases,

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gold plate, and china, lighted with dulled reflections. It is not as robust, tranquil, and luminous as the "Wedding at Cana," but it is full of variety, abundance, cleverness, and a most agreeable silvery colour.

"The Martyrdom of Saint Hippolytus," "Saint Basil Bringing back a Child to Life," and "The Martyrdom of Saint Peter" are works full of fire and dash recalling the great Italian tradition, with the addition of a touch of French originality. Subleyras, who excelled in painting large altar-pieces and whose "Mass of Saint Basil" was executed in mosaic in the Church of Saint Peter at Rome, an honour scarcely ever granted to living artists, was also a charming *genre* painter. "Brother Philip's Geese," "The Falcon," "The Hermit," subjects taken from La Fontaine's "Tales," are most clever, graceful, and witty.

Vien, whose glory is much dimmed nowadays, greatly influenced the art of his time. He was — what is not always given to great geniuses — the promoter of a complete revolution in the taste of his day, and it is from him that classical painting dates, or at least, the movement which caused the abandonment of the free, easy, clever manner of the French school,

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later contemptuously referred to as rococo. He was not a very true or very austere Roman; but he had a tendency to simplicity, to quiet lines, to sober colouring, which contrasted with the flamboyant and technical manner of the French artists of his day. The Louvre has by him "Saint Germain, Bishop of Auxerre," and "Saint Vincent, Deacon of the Church of Syracuse," "Dædalus and Icarus," "The Sleeping Hermit," "Cupids playing with Swans," "Flowers," and "Doves." "Dædalus and Icarus" exhibits in the drawing of the bodies a striving after the style of antiquity; while on the other hand "The Hermit" testifies to a study of nature and a literalness which to-day would be called realism.

As for Boucher, he had indeed the true painter's temperament: inexhaustible invention, prodigious variety, and an execution which is always artistic, even in his most careless work. Undoubtedly he abused these precious gifts, but it is the rich alone who may be prodigal, and before you can throw money away, you must have it. Boucher proved equal, without ever falling below himself, to the most fearful wastefulness of talent during a long artistic life. It is almost impossible to draw up a list of his works. His drawings

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alone number more than ten thousand. He painted ceilings, panels above doors, bays, portraits, mythological subjects, pastoral subjects, landscapes, scenes for the opera, designs for tapestries; he painted pianos, screens, cabinets, sedan chairs, state carriages. His facile brush was ready for anything, and whatever he did, he imparted to it a grace, a charm, and a bloom which no one possessed to the same degree. He was long the idol of an age that preferred prettiness to beauty, piquancy to style, and wit to everything. The idol fell, and Boucher's name, with that of Van Loo, was long reprobated in classical studios; but now Boucher's worth is well understood.

The "Diana at the Bath" in the Louvre is a delightful painting. The goddess is about to enter the water, one of her nymphs, kneeling before her, having just taken off her sandals. She is nude, with the silvery nudity of virginal goddesses. One of her legs is bent and with the other she is just entering the water; she holds in her hand a string of pearls that she has taken off. Bending forward, she inclines somewhat her lovely head, seen in profile, with the hair drawn up, dressed with pearls and a tiny crescent. Her neck, shoulders, and torso, bathed in light, transparent shadow, have

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extreme suppleness, freshness, and grace. The nymph also is charming, and these young bodies, so easily turned to coquettish poses, stand out against the landscape formed of reeds, brush, trees with twisted roots clinging to the steep slopes of a ravine, a spring where dogs are drinking, and a mound by the spring, on which carelessly thrown stuffs exhibit the sheen of their many folds. A quiver and arrows and, in a corner, a bow, and a trophy of game composed of partridges and hares, fill up picturesquely the corners of the composition, and all is painted with admirable certainty and vivacity of touch. One of Boucher's merits is that his least compositions are pictures and decorate the wall on which they are hung. "Rinaldo and Armida," "Venus asking Arms of Vulcan for Æneas," in which there is a charming group of three Graces, Venus's maids, are meritorious paintings, although they are so pretty. The two works called "Pastoral Subject" take us into an idyllic world invented by Boucher for the benefit of the eighteenth century, which was the least idyllic of ages in spite of its pastoral pretensions. The sheep are carefully washed, the shepherdesses wear bodices with bows of ribbon and have complexions in no wise like the tanned faces of country girls, while the shep-

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herds themselves look like opera dancers; nevertheless, the paintings are irresistibly seductive, and affectation becomes lovelier than truth.

Carle Van Loo is also a painter of great talent as well as a serious student. He knows a great deal, although he is attractive. If his "Marriage of the Virgin," "Apollo flaying Marsyas," and "Æneas bearing Anchises" are not much looked at, the style no longer being fashionable, every one stops with pleasure before "A Hunting Halt," a scene of princely life brilliantly rendered. Pretty indeed are the women's heads, graceful are their attitudes, gallantly worn are their elegant costumes. There is such a high-bred air about them, they live so naturally in that atmosphere of luxury, power, and pleasure! The mule, harnessed in Spanish fashion, which bears the provisions, is as beautiful in drawing and colour as a mule by Karel du Jardin.

No one was better gifted than Fragonard; every fairy seems to have been present at his birth. Less mythological than Boucher, he expresses the taste, the fancy, and the caprice of the age with incredible dash and cleverness. His paintings are charming, his sketches are better than his paintings, his drawings better than

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his sketches. He does not need much to render an idea, — a thin coat of dark brown, a rosy and bluish local tint, a few hatchings, a flash of light, and he has a whole world of little figures, living, smiling, looking for each other, embracing, running, or fluttering through vapoury cloud or grove. The Louvre has by him "The High Priest Coresus sacrificing himself to save Callirrhoë," a "Landscape," and "The Music Lesson."

It is at this time that a new element, the commonplace, sentimental element, makes its appearance. In the coquettish, libertine, witty art of the eighteenth century, which had prettiness for ideal, and for purpose the decoration of the boudoirs of marchionesses, painting strives to imitate literature, and Diderot's "Poetics," as expounded in the "Père de Famille," are applied by Greuze. The smaller dramas of domestic life had not yet received the honours of painting, and in so far the painter of "The Father's Curse" and "The Repentant Son" did original work. It may be said of Greuze, as of Hogarth, that the moral scenes which he represents appear rather to have been posed and the gestures made by excellent actors than copied directly from nature; it is truth, but seen through an interpretation and a disguise. Everything is thought out, full of meaning,

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and aims at a certain end; every stroke contains what literary men call ideas when they are talking of painting; consequently Diderot celebrated Greuze in the most lyric fashion. He is no mediocre artist, however; he invented a *genre* unknown before him, and he possesses genuine artistic qualities, — colouring, form, touch; his heads, modelled in square parts, or rather in facets, have relief and life; the draperies, or rather, the clothes rumpled, rough and treated carelessly in systematic fashion in order to set off the delicacy of the flesh, exhibit in apparent carelessness clever handling. "The Father's Curse" and "The Repentant Son" are well painted, harmonious, with a practical moral; but I prefer "The Marriage Contract" because of the lovely head of the young bride, than which it is impossible to see anything more youthful, more blooming, more candid, and more coquettishly maidenly, if these two words may be conjoined. Greuze — and this is the reason of the renown which he now enjoys, after an eclipse of his glory caused by the interposition of David and his school — has a particular gift of painting woman in her early bloom, when the bud is about to blossom as the rose, and the child to turn into a maiden. In the eighteenth century everybody, even moralists,

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was somewhat of a libertine. When Greuze paints Innocence, he always takes care to draw aside the gauze and to give a glimpse of a youthful bosom; he puts in the eyes a lustrous flame and on the lips a soft smile which leads one to think that Innocence might easily turn into Voluptuousness. "The Broken Pitcher" is the model of this class. The head still has the candour of childhood, but the neckerchief is pulled aside, the leaves of the rose in the bodice fall, the flowers are only half held in by the folds of the dress, and the pitcher allows the water to escape through a crack.

Chardin began by painting still life, and he may be ranked with the Flemish and the Dutch on account of his exact imitation, his strong colouring, and the solidity of his impasto. In that mildly mannered and agreeably false art, he represents absolute truth; he is a realist in the truest sense of the word. Velasquez began in the same way, and for a long time painted fruits, vegetables, game, fish, vases, bowls, kitchen utensils, and it was in such study that he gained the admirable knowledge of local tone characteristic of his paintings. When Chardin, who had thus prepared himself, was emboldened to paint faces, his attempts were completely successful. He gave proof of the

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same honesty, the same carefulness, the same conscientiousness. He excels in rendering the good, calm, bourgeois life of the day, when there were other people besides marquises and opera singers. "The Industrious Mother," "Grace before Meat," "The Kitchen," and a still life of animals and fruits on a stone table exhibit Chardin in his double character.

After this pleasant and skilful artist, we have to pass over Boilly, Demarne, Mlle. Gérard, Mlle. Mayer, the friend and pupil of Prud'hon, whose works are sometimes mistaken for his, and Prud'hon himself, whose fine "Crucified Christ," his last work, darkened by a melancholy presentiment, I have not space to describe. I must content myself also with mentioning Le Thière's "Death of Virginia," "Brutus condemning his Children," and a delightful sketch by David of "Mme. Récamier" in a white tunic lying upon a sofa of Greek form; Siganon's "Saint Jerome and the Courtesan," the one terrible and the other lovely; the unfortunate Leopold Robert's "Harvesters in the Pontine Marshes," "The Pilgrimage of the Madonna dell' Arco;" Bonnington's "Francis I," "The Duchess of Étampes," and the "Quarrel of Trissotin and

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Vadius" by Poterlet, a marvellously gifted colourist who died quite young.

Let us make up our minds to leave these rooms, every one of which would call for a whole volume, and cast a rapid glance at the other riches contained in the Louvre in the way of statues of antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance, vases, mummies, sphinxes, stelæ, tombs, papyri, terra cottas, stamped work, gems, bulls with men's heads, Ninevite *bassi-relievi*, curiosities of all kinds, jewels, and relics of sovereigns.

On leaving the Hall of the Seven Chimneys, one traverses a series of rooms with painted ceilings, in one of which was formerly placed the "Apotheosis of Homer" by Ingres, which has been replaced by a copy. The first rooms contain superb Greek vases, — rhytons, cups, and all the marvels of the ceramics of antiquity. The others are filled with Egyptian antiquities. One comes upon mummy cases covered with paintings and hieroglyphs, papyri written in demotic characters, sacred scarabei, uræus snakes, statues of Isis and Nephthys in green ware, mummies of cats and ibises, the shape of which shows faintly through the bandages, masks painted with red ochre, representations of the dog-headed Anubis and of Osiris

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with the funeral beard on the chin, boxes of green rouge, toilet cases, mystic baris, mammisis or small portable chapels, necklaces and neckplates of enamels, amschirs or censers, tissues, weapons, utensils of all sorts, collected in the various necropolis of that vast and vanished civilisation.

These halls comprise the former Museum of Charles X. There are at the outer door two coffins of black basalt standing against the wall like two sentries; on the bottom are gilded engravings of the young dead whom they so long held. On the landing-place is a statue in Græco-Egyptian style of the days of Ptolemy.

The stairs lead to the lower hall, where formerly was exhibited statuary when the Salon was held in the Louvre. On the Canopæan vases, of which they form the stoppers, are seen heads of women with faint smiles and oblique glances like those of the sphinxes, similar and diverse, with the same type and with individual physiognomies, which, modelled as they are in a sort of rosy clay, have almost the flush of life. Farther on a colossal sphinx in reddish granite stretches out upon its pedestal its paws and its rounded quarters with curves as graceful as those of a beautiful woman's hips.

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The curiously charming head is full of mysterious kindliness, in which the animal's instinct seems to be jeering at human thought. Then come monstrous gods with animals' heads, their arms pressed close to their bodies, their feet caught in the stone: Typhon, Osiris, Phtha, Isis, Hathor, Nephthys, the ram-headed, the dog-headed, all the natural and religious symbolism of antique Egypt; huge heads of broken colossi wearing the *pschent*, feet broken above the ankle, which are larger than men, gigantic remains of the Pharaohs, forgotten in the sand; tombs of kings and princes and hierogrammats of basalt, granite, porphyry, in one block, covered within and without with hieroglyphs engraved as with a graver on wax, on such hard stone that it blunts steel and time cannot wear it; stelæ; chapels cut out of one block, — the flotsam and jetsam of a vanished world.

On the other side is the Assyrian Museum. You leave Thebes or Memphis and enter Nineveh; you leave Cheops, Rameses, Thothmes, Nechao, to approach Phul Belasis, Tiglath Pileser, and Assur Haddon; Pharaonic enormity for Biblical enormity. The giant, human-faced bulls with eagles' wings, the giants crushing lions to their breasts, are seen there in the

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same pose as at the entrances of the palaces during the frightful orgies which made God write upon the wall. They are the very same; they look at you from the depths of ages with their quiet glance. There is not a curl wanting to their well-trimmed beards, not a fluting from their symmetrically striated wings, their tiaras are intact; no detail of the anatomy has been dulled, and the veins still show upon their muscular legs.

In the walls are set long *bassi-relievi*, representing hunts, triumphal entries, cavalcades, the horses in which, admirably studied out, are worthy of being the ancestors of the Parthenon horses: all the details of that wonderful past civilisation are seen in these sculptures with amazing clearness. Costumes, weapons, carts, harnesses are so accurately shown that it would be easy to reproduce them. The attack of a fortress represented on one of the *bassi-relievi*, enables one thoroughly to understand Ninevite strategy. Great plates are covered from top to bottom with cuneiform inscriptions. Science has begun to decipher this mysterious alphabet, and we shall soon learn what mean these mysterious legends that irritate curiosity to such a pitch.

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A few remains of Phœnician antiquity: tombs resembling mummy cases and preserving the outline of the body, representing in the upper part a mask no doubt reproducing the face of the dead; fragments of altars consecrated to Oannes, the fish god; votive or historical inscriptions, all these are ranged in the hall next to the Ninevite Museum.

Beyond are placed Greek sculptures from Asia Minor: the frieze and the pediment of the temple of Phingalia, with their horsemen, and figures, which, even in their broken condition, reveal something of their original beauty.

In spite of their grandiose work, Egypt and Assyria are still far from the ideal of pure beauty, which Greece realised. Under that serene sky, among mountains and sites of more human proportions, genius developed harmoniously and simply, and it strove to attain perfection rather than vastness. A gymnastic education in which the love of form was carried to idolatry was bound to produce sculptors, by continually putting form in motion before them in all the brilliancy of youth and gracefulness and strength. The Greek artists were fortunate enough to live among the most perfect types and models, which their peculiar

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civilisation allowed them to see unveiled. Their anthropomorphous religion, in which every god was but the symbol of one of the energies or the beauties of men, gave the greatest latitude to statuary. Never did art attain greater beauty, nobility, and purity. When one enters the Museum of Antiques, in the presence of that population of marble with rhythmic attitudes, elegant and true forms, among these unchanging bodies which seem never to have known fatigue, sorrow, or sickness, one is filled with luminous serenity and peaceful happiness. Modern ugliness and bustle are forgotten, and when against the dark red background stands out the "Venus of Milo," one remains dazzled, and wonders whether since the Olympians were driven from their golden thrones, the world has not been plunged in a nightmare. How tall and noble and beautiful is that Venus, filled with a higher life and the plenitude of immortality; on her half-opened lips a faint, divine smile, in her eyes a superhuman glance! Her torso is nude like that of the great divinities; round the hips clings a drapery in broad, soft folds, which outline the contours and mark instead of veiling them. The arms have gone, but it seems as though, if they were found, they would spoil the delight of the

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eye by preventing one from seeing that superb bosom and those wonderful breasts. And it was in the temple of a small island that stood this masterpiece of an unknown sculptor, worthy of the finest period of Hellenic art!

After seeing the Venus of Milo, one can only glance carelessly at the Apollos, Antinoüs, the Genii of Eternal Rest, Hercules, Fauns, Venuses, Graces, Minervas, Polyhymnias, Germanicus, Discoboli, and even at the "Gladiator," that marvel of anatomy. One is still dazzled by supreme beauty.

In the centre of the Renaissance Hall, enthroned, half lying upon her pedestal, is "Diana of Poictiers," by Jean Goujon; nude like the mythological Diana, with her elegant, slender limbs, her delicate head with the hair tressed artistically and coquettishly, and her slender hand resting upon a stag with golden antlers, like the incarnation of the Renaissance, the modern antiquity that discovered a new ideal.

In the wall are set *bassi-relievi* by Jean Goujon, representing the "Nymphs of the Seine" and "Tritons Playing with Nereids." On a pedestal rise three figures, back to back, by Germain Pilon, supporting the golden urn which was to contain the hearts of Henry

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II and Catherine of Medici, so elegant and so graceful as to dispel any funereal idea. In the same room are the "Three Virtues" in Florentine bronze, of proud port, brought from the tomb of Anne of Montmorency, by Barthélemy Gainer; a curious mausoleum by Germain Pilon, which represents Valentine Balbiani, the wife of René de Birague, represented on the cover as a living woman and within the tomb as a decomposed body.

In another hall Michael Angelo's "Prisoners" struggle splendidly as if to break their bonds. One of them, driven to despair by the uselessness of his efforts, has thrown back his head and closed his eyes. Sublime indeed is this representation of powerless force!

A great bronze tympanum shows the "Nymph of Fontainebleau" pouring out water from her urn amid a riot of dogs and stags, symbolising the chase. Diana of Poictiers confiscated the Nymph for her château of Anet, on account of its resemblance to her. The bas-relief of "Saint George and the Dragon" by Michel Colomb is amazingly elegant in composition, and delicate and accurate in detail. I regret that I must be satisfied with mentioning the names of Francheville,

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Olivieri, Ponce, Simon Guillain, Guillaume Berthelet, each of them represented by remarkable works.

But we are not yet done. Inexhaustible are the riches of the Louvre. On the other side of the court another museum contains modern sculptures, from "Milo of Croton," and "Alexander before Diogenes" to Pradier's "Atalanta." Here is the famous group of "Love and Psyche" by Canova.

The Campana Museum is positively discouraging, with its vast quantity of terra cottas, friezes, and small figures which fill its cases, and would call for a volume to describe, the Etruscan tombs on which are stretched, lying on their elbow, figures with painted eyes. The Museum of the Sovereigns would also require another volume. How is it possible to describe in a few lines all these relics of royalty, beginning with the Iron Chair of Dagobert, continuing with the armour of Francis I, and ending with the hat and sword of Napoleon?

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Leonardo da Vinci

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LEONARDO DA VINCI

THE Greeks had attained beauty in everything; and the sacred rock of the Acropolis, laden with temples and sculptures, remained standing, like the altar of human genius, amid solitude and ruins due to barbarism rather than time, but ignored, so to speak, and its teaching vain. Without seeking to be unjust to the efforts and attempts of later civilisations, one may affirm that a long night followed that brilliant day, and that the feeling for beauty disappeared for many a century amid the cataclysms of empires and the chaos of the Middle Ages.

Sculpture and painting, borne down by the fall of polytheism, wholly vanished. Thirteen centuries passed from the coming of Christ to the days of Andrea Taffi and Cimabue, who scarcely do more than reproduce the old trite Byzantine patterns. It will take one or two hundred years more before men get rid of painting on gold backgrounds and of childish sculpture worthy of the Chinese and savages.

But at last comes that marvellous sixteenth century, when the mind of man suddenly awakes as from a long

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dream, and regains possession of itself. That moment full of grace and charm is best expressed by the name Renaissance, used to designate that climacteric epoch. After the long, opaque darkness filled with nightmare, terror, and anguish, came the new dawn. Beauty, so long forgotten, appeared radiant, and enchanted the world with its youthful brilliancy. A few manuscripts deciphered in spite of the obstacles presented by the Gothic, monkish handwriting, a few fragments of antique marbles unearthed as if by a miracle, sufficed to bring about this revolution.

Those lamps of life, which, as Lucretius so beautifully says, runners pass from one to another, were lighted again from the spark of antiquity, and shone joyously in hands that never again would allow them to go out. One of those whose lamp gave out the brightest beams was Leonardo da Vinci; its flame, although dimmed by the black smoke of time, still shines star-like, and when one of the paintings of the master is met with, smoky and darkened though it may be, the gallery is at once lighted up by it.

Leonardo da Vinci, the natural son of Messer Pietro, notary to the Republic, was born in 1452 in a small château, the ruins of which still exist by Lake Fu-

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cecchio, not far from Florence, in a lovely landscape. Everything had to be joyous, graceful, and smiling for this child of love who soon became the handsomest of men. Nature, as if claiming for herself her most perfect work, would not give him a legitimate family; and without calling the fairies to his cradle, — they came of themselves and endowed him with every possible gift — it seemed as though, by a sort of self-love, she was making up in him for her abortions and her imperfect attempts.

Contrary to custom, Leonardo da Vinci never knew the struggles nor the difficulties of beginners. Admiration came to him quite young, and never departed from him. He died in the arms of a king; and if modern erudition doubts the truth of this legend, it is so fitting a crown to this happy and quiet life that everybody will certainly believe in it.

As a child, his earliest drawings excited surprise and incredulity. Placed under Verocchio, who was a good sculptor and a good painter, he gave proof of such precocious superiority that the pupil rapidly became the master. It is certain that he painted in one of his teacher's pictures an angel's head so beautiful and of such novel and uncommon taste, that it killed the rest

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of the work and foretold that Italy was about to enjoy unrivalled glory. Indeed, there is no one superior to Leonardo, neither Raphael, Michael Angelo, nor Correggio. They may have sat down beside him on his lofty eminence, but no one ever ascended higher. It is to be noted, too, that he is the earliest of all, and that he at once carried art to a degree of perfection which has never been surpassed since.

So much glory would seem to be sufficient for a man, and yet painting was but one of da Vinci's gifts. Equally endowed in every respect, he might have done everything else just as well. He possessed a universal, encyclopædic genius; he had acquired all the knowledge of his times, and — a much rarer quality — he sought nature directly.

To thoroughly understand the genius of Leonardo da Vinci, it must be remembered that he worked, as it were, without a model, and invented as he produced. This, indeed, was his greatest endowment. He did not care, like certain other painters, to multiply his works; he was satisfied in everything with having once attained his end; having realised his ideal, he broke off, he disdained to go on. He was the kind of man who would make endless studies for a single picture, and

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then afterwards never use them again, but turn to another exercise. Once his curiosity was satisfied, nothing interested him; once he had made his model, once he had got his proof, he broke the mould. He had the feeling for what is exquisite, rare, and absolute. Every picture was but a successful experiment, a desire accomplished, which he thought it needless to repeat. In every branch of art he has left an ineffaceable mark; he has trodden upon the highest summits; he seems to have climbed for the sake of climbing, for he at once goes elsewhere. He does not seem to have cared for wealth or fame; he attained excellence simply to prove to himself that he was superior. So he painted the finest portrait, the finest picture, the finest fresco, and drew the finest cartoon. That was enough. Then he bethought himself of something else: the modelling of a gigantic horse, the cutting of the Navaglio Canal, of fortifying cities, or designing war engines, inventing diving apparatus, flying machines, and other more or less chimerical fancies. He almost suspected the power of steam; he had a presentiment of aeronautics; he turned out birds that flew and animals that walked; he played upon a silver lyre in the shape of a horse's head which he had made himself,

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and invented a reversed handwriting which can be read only in a mirror, a cipher every secret of which has not yet been made out. He studied anatomy, not like Michael Angelo to parade it, but to know it; and drew admirable studies of muscles which he made no use of, for there are no figures more wrapped in garments than his own. Besides being an artist, he was a philosopher almost equal to Bacon, an enemy to scholastics; believing in experiment only and seeking from nature the solution of his doubts. He made everything, even his colours and his sizing. But do not imagine that he was a sort of haughty pedant or alchemist, living in a studio changed into a laboratory. No one was more human, more loving, more attractive than Leonardo da Vinci. He was witty, graceful, skilful, so strong that he could bend a horseshoe, and withal endowed with perfect, Apollo-like beauty. He was so gentle, tender, and sympathetic, so true a lover of nature, so thoughtful of the least suffering, that he would purchase caged birds to set them free, delighted at seeing them fly madly into the azure; a rare quality in those fierce, rough times when, far from feeling pity for animals, men were almost indifferent to human life.

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Leonardo loved horses. He was an admirable horseman, and upon the most spirited and restive steeds, he would leap hedges and ditches, and indulge in volts and curvets which filled the spectators with admiration and terror. It is the artist alone I have spoken of, though, great as he is, Leonardo the painter is but one part of Leonardo. Art did not wholly absorb him; he wrestled with it and came out victor, without the muscle of his thigh being withered, as was the case with Jacob when he wrestled with the angel.

What means did he have? That is not known; but until he was thirty, Leonardo lived in great style at Florence. He had horses, servants, fine clothes, every luxury of the day. Fortune, usually blind, had taken off her bandage for him, and favoured him as though he were unworthy of it. Never did misfortune, as I have said, venture to approach that lovely life and make it pay for its glory.

While leading a splendid life, he painted amid many occupations and fancies; for his universal mind turned ardently in every direction, not even disdaining physical jokes, such as combining evil-smelling gases and filling bladders which, when dilated, compelled the spectators to flee from the room.

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His earlier manner still recalls that of Verocchio, he reproduces nature by a borrowed method; but already the accent of originality is recognisable. That manner is more archaic, the drawing is harder, the tone lighter, the modelling less powerful than in his later manner, when he rendered nature through his own feelings and without any intermediary means. Indeed, the characteristic of Leonardo is a constant, attentive, thorough, intimate study of nature; rendered not in the brutal fashion of our modern realists, but with marvellous delicacy, patience, knowledge, and power of selection. He is at once truthful and fantastic, accurate and visionary; he mingles reality and dream in surprising proportions. His works have a magical power of fascination. They represent a deep, mysterious, almost terrifying life, though long since the darkening of the colours has removed any possibility of illusion.

Every one knows the story of the buckler ordered by a peasant of Vinci, on which Leonardo was to paint some terrifying emblem. For a number of months the artist kept collecting adders, reptiles, lizards, toads, and bats, with the help of which he composed a hybrid monster of remarkable zoological resemblance and terrifying effect. Of course the peasant did not get the

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buckler, which was sold for three hundred ducats to Galeas, Duke of Milan. It is probable that these studies were utilised by Leonardo in the Medusa's head, now in the Museum at Florence. Around the pale, bloodless face the green hair writhes hideously, every separate hair hissing and twisting. The reptiles are more important than the face, foreshortened as if to conceal the convulsions of death; for Leonardo disliked excessive expression and held in this respect to the ideas of antiquity. But no doubt he enjoyed showing how well he could paint serpents.

The "Child in a Cradle" seen at Bologna, the "Magdalen" at the Pitti and at the Aldobrandini Palaces, the Holy Families, the Herodias with the head of Saint John the Baptist, of which a number of galleries are very proud, are not yet quite Leonardo, although their authencity cannot be doubted. It was only later, in the second period of his life, that he at last found his true and final manner.

Da Vinci's ideal, though it possesses the purity, grace, and perfection of antiquity, is wholly modern in feeling. He expresses a finesse, a suavity, and an elegance unknown to the ancients. The lovely Greek heads, with their unapproachable correctness, are merely serene;

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mistresses, Cecilia Galerani and Lucrezia Crevelli; the latter Stendhal believes is represented in the familiar portrait in the Louvre representing a woman in a red bodice trimmed with gold, and generally called "*La Belle Ferronnière*," on account of the diamond she wears on her brow. He began to model, for the equestrian statue of Lodovico, a horse as large as the horse of Troy, the casting of which was to require two hundred thousand pounds of metal. He carried out his marvellous hydraulic works, and prepared for the refectory of Santa Maria della Croce the cartoon of "The Last Supper," the heads of which he painted first separately, by way of study, in oils and pastel.

With a small sketchbook he traversed the streets of Milan, the walks, the markets, and especially the Borghetto, a sort of Court of Miracles where met the rascals of the place, seeking the type of the evil face for his Judas, whose head long remained blank on the wall, for da Vinci had not come across any physiognomy perfidious, low, and scoundrelly enough for the apostle who sold his God, his Master, and his Friend for money. At last he found what he wanted, and the work was finished, after being dropped and taken up again many times. Leonardo's work was wholly natu-

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ral. He never painted unless he clearly saw what he wanted, and left nothing to the chance of the brush. Often he would hasten from one end of the city, give two or three touches to the painting and withdraw; at other times he would simply look at it in silence, and he used to say that these were not the days on which he worked least hard.

"The Last Supper" is not a fresco unfortunately; if it were, it would still be as brilliant as that of Montorfano, placed opposite. It was painted with oil colours, the fatty substance being eliminated by a peculiar process invented by Leonardo, and upon a not very solid surface. It has been spared no outrage, and yet its mere shadow suffices to eclipse all other masterpieces.

The Louvre is rich in paintings by da Vinci, the wondrous master who conquered the first rank with a small number of masterpieces. There are few museums which possess so many authentic ones. In vain does the Museum of Madrid believe it possesses the "Gioconda;" we have the original.

The "Vierge aux Rochers," well known through engravings, is in Leonardo's second manner. The modelling is wrought with a care unknown to painters

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unaccustomed to sculpture. The roundness of the bodies, due to the gradation of tints, the accuracy of the shadows, and the parsimonious reserve of light, betray in this unparalleled painting the habits of the sculptor. Leonardo is known to have said that it was only by modelling that the painter could learn the science of shadows. The clay figures which he used in his work were long preserved.

The appearance of the "Vierge aux Rochers" is singularly mysterious and charming. A sort of basaltic grotto shelters the divine group, on the bank of a spring, through the limpid waters of which the pebbly bed is seen. Beyond the arcade of the grotto shows a rocky landscape with a few scattered, slender trees; it is traversed by a river on the banks of which rises a village. The whole composition is painted in an indefinable colour like that of the chimerical countries one traverses in dreams, and is wonderfully calculated to bring out the figures.

Adorable indeed is the figure of the Madonna. It is of a type peculiar to Leonardo, and in no wise recalls the Madonnas of Raphael. The upper portion of the head is spherical, the brow well developed; the oval of the cheeks blends into a delicately curved chin, and the

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half-closed eyes are in penumbra; the nose, although delicate, does not form a straight line with the brow like the noses of Greek statues, the nostrils are well outlined and palpitate under the breath; the mouth, somewhat large, has the vague, enigmatic, delightful smile which da Vinci gave to his women's faces. A sweet archness mingles with an expression of purity and kindness. The long, delicate, silky hair falls in wavy locks on cheeks bathed in shadow and half-tints, and sets them off with incomparable grace. It is the Lombard type, idealised by wondrous execution, the sole defect of which may be said to be too absolute perfection.

And then what hands, especially the one which, outstretched, shows the fingers foreshortened! Ingres alone managed to perform a similar *tour de force* in the figure of "Music crowning Cherubino." The adjustment of the draperies is in the exquisite, precious taste characteristic of da Vinci. A medallion clasp fastens on the bosom the ends of the mantle, which is raised by the arms in noble and delicate folds.

The angel which points out the Child Jesus to the little Saint John, has the most suave, the most delicate, and the proudest face that ever a brush produced on

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canvas. It belongs, if one may so express it, to the highest celestial aristocracy. It looks like the face of a page of high birth accustomed to stand on the steps of a throne. The angel's curled, wavy hair falls in abundance around a head drawn so purely and so delicately that it surpasses feminine beauty, and suggests a type superior to the highest ideals of men. The eyes are not turned towards the group, for he does not need to look in order to see, and even were he not winged, it would be impossible to mistake him for any but an angel. A divine indifference shows upon his charming face, which scarce deigns to smile faintly. He fulfils the message of the Eternal with impassible serenity. Unquestionably no virgin, no woman ever was lovelier, but the most virile spirit, the most powerful intelligence shines out of those black eyes fixed vaguely upon the spectator who seeks to penetrate their mystery.

Every one knows how difficult it is to paint children. The undeveloped forms of tender age are not well suited to artistic expression. Leonardo da Vinci, in the little Saint John of the "Vierge aux Rochers," has solved the problem with his usual skill. The attitude of the child, in which every part of the body is foreshortened, is full of the refined, uncommon, yet natural

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grace which marks every work of the sublime artist. There can be no finer modelling than that of the head with its plump, dimpled cheeks, the little round, plump arms, the body with fat folds, and the legs half drawn up, as the child sits on the sward. The shadows blend with the light in gradations of infinite delicacy and impart extraordinary relief to the figure.

Half enveloped in a thin gauze, the divine child kneels with clasped hands as if He were already conscious of His mission and understood the gesture which the little Saint John repeats in accordance with the angel's directions.

As for the colouring, if in darkening it has lost its true value, it has gained a harmony which refined taste prefers to the bloom and brilliancy of tint. The tones have darkened in such perfect proportion that the result is a sort of neutral, abstract, ideal, mysterious tint which clothes the forms as with a celestial veil and removes them from terrestrial reality.

There is another side of Leonardo's art, seen in the "Virgin and Saint Anne." In this painting the shadows are less gray and violet. The painter probably did not use the black which he invented and which has worked so much to the surface in his other paintings.

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In the centre of a landscape of rocks and slender trees with scanty foliage, Saint Anne holds the Virgin in her lap. The latter bends with an adorable gesture towards the Infant Jesus, who is playing with a lamb which He draws by the ear, a childish and charming gesture that in no wise impairs the nobility of the composition, and prevents any coldness. A few pretty wrinkles ray the brow of Saint Anne, but do not diminish her beauty; for Leonardo da Vinci disliked sad thoughts and would not afflict the eye with the sight of decrepitude. The head of the Virgin, seen somewhat from below, has exquisitely fine lines. It beams with virginal grace and maternal love; the eyes are humid, and the half-smiling mouth has the indefinable expression of which Leonardo kept the secret. The face is painted, like the rest of the picture, with a softness, a *morbidezza* which the artist might perhaps have destroyed, had he finished it more.

There is a tradition that the painting was made from a cartoon by Leonardo, and that Bernardino Luini filled in the artist's outline. It is possible, but unquestionably the master's brush has been put to it. No other proof is needed than the works of Luini himself, charming as they are.

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It is curious that Leonardo da Vinci, who possessed such a thorough knowledge of anatomy, scarcely ever painted any nude figures. For my part, the only one I know of is the "Leda." She is represented standing in a pose full of eurythmia, worthy of the finest Greek statues, which, however, it does not resemble, for da Vinci, original in everything, drew beauty from its very source in nature. At the feet of Leda, which are as noble and pure as if they were carved out of Parian marble, play, amid the shells of the broken eggs, the graceful children of the divine swan. The young woman has that expression of sarcastic and superior gayety which is the very mark of Leonardo. Her eyes, sparkling with fun, laugh out between their slightly wrinkled eyelids, the mouth is turned up towards the corners, the cheeks are dimpled with such soft voluptuousness and fine sinuosities that they are almost perfidious. The only reproach that may be addressed to this charming figure is that the perfection is carried too far, that the touch has a finish which recalls the first strivings of art.

Leonardo, in the "Saint John the Baptist" in the Louvre, seems to me to have overdone his smile. The figure of the saint half emerges from a dark, shadowy

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background. With one hand he points to heaven; but his face, effeminate to the point of making you doubt his sex, is so sardonic, so sly, so full of reticence and mystery, that it causes uneasiness and inspires vague suspicions as to his orthodoxy. He looks like one of the fallen gods of Heinrich Heine, who, in order to live, have taken office in the new religion. He points to heaven, but he laughs at it and seems to mock at the credulous spectator. He knows the secret doctrine, and does not believe in the least in the Christ whom he announces; nevertheless, for the sake of the vulgar he performs the conventional gesture, but enlightens clever people by his diabolical smile. I can understand that Leonardo should have been accused of having a religion of his own, an occult philosophy not in accord with the common faith. A figure such as that of "Saint John the Baptist" would suffice to justify such suspicions. Certainly Leonardo never was an atheist, but he may have unconsciously been a pantheist. He died as a good Catholic, with all the sacraments of the Church, as may be seen in a letter of Francesco Melzi, his pupil, who had followed him to France.

A sort of evil fate seems to have pursued the great works of Leonardo. The gigantic horse on which he

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had worked for more than sixteen years, was destroyed; there is nothing left of the "Last Supper" but a shadow, — a shadow, it is true, by the side of which many a sun pales.

Luini, Salaï, Melzi, Beltraffio, and others have painted in Vinci's manner numbers of Herodias, Madonnas, and Magdalens, which in catalogues are ascribed to the master, and occasionally are not unworthy of the honour. I have myself seen in Burgos, in the sacristy of the cathedral, a "Magdalen" with long, silky, delicate hair, and shadowy half-tints wonderfully managed, attributed with some probability to Leonardo; but it is not by him, for the sublime idler painted but little. What is the use of repeating one's self, once perfection has been attained?

How can one believe in such numbers of works? Leonardo took four years to paint the portrait of Mona Lisa, and then he considered it unfinished. He made haste so slowly that during his stay in Rome, having received an order from Leo X, he began by distilling plants in order to compose a varnish intended for the painting which he was to execute and which he did not paint, according to his habit. He was content with having proved in a few works that he was a

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great painter. Perhaps, indeed, he was prouder of his talents as an engineer than as a painter.

It would scarcely be supposed that the handsome Leonardo, so elegant, noble, rare, and exquisite, possessed in the highest degree the gift of caricature. In this line, as in every other, he must have attained perfection at once. He discovers with intense comic force, with masterly sarcasm, with grotesque power, the peculiar angle, the characteristic detail, the exaggerated side, the distinctive peculiarity of each face. He brings out the beast concealed in every man; with one stroke of the pencil, as with the stroke of a paw, he draws off the face and exhibits the mask concealed below it. He brings the passions, vices, and absurdities to the surface and emphasises them by some prodigious anatomical exaggeration. The caricatures which he made in the Milan streets upon a sketchbook, or which he scribbled from memory on the margins of manuscripts, have been collected and engraved by Carlo Giuseppe Gerli. They are characterised by eccentricity and grandeur, and a sort of terrifying joviality. It would not take much to make these burlesque masks frightful, so strange and powerful are the bones, muscles, and veins. The lower jaws pro-

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ject a foot; the noses are hooked like beaks; the orbits of the eyes are like deep vaults wherein the flaccid eyelids flap like bats' wings; the lips are drawn back, showing gums toothless or with tusks; the cheek-bones are like rocks; the profile sinks in or sticks out, opening or diminishing the facial angle with incredible power of ridicule. Behind the vaguely human appearance passes the hideous menagerie of bestiality and of vice: gormandism, voluptuousness, idleness, idiocy have each their characteristic faces, every one a deformity. And the marvellous thing is that every one of those picturesquely monstrous heads, if it were framed in by foliage or a volute, would form a superb mask ejecting the water of a fountain, chewing a door-knocker, or grinning in the keystone of an arch. A formidable power tortures the contours, deepens the cavities, brings out the muscles to the very surface, shows the skeleton through the flesh, exaggerates boldly or lessens for the purpose of caricature. It is the cruel but irresistible joviality of a young and handsome god that mocks at human deformity. It seems as though the artist sought to make a sort of course in teratology, in the broad meaning of Geoffroy de Saint-Hilaire, and to prove beauty through ugliness, the normal through disorder.

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Caricature, such as it is understood in modern times, has no relation whatever to these drawings, the fancifulness of which always springs from the deepest learning, and which are, so to speak, anatomical arabesques with muscles for scrolls. They are titanic gambols which neither Hogarth, Cruikshank, Gavarni, or Daumier can indulge in in spite of their talent; for Vinci is as mighty in these powerful sketches as in his most finished paintings. If he had chosen, he might have been Michael Angelo, just as he was Raphael; but he was himself — that was enough. Grace attracted him more than strength, although he was quite capable of being strong. His cartoon of the battle of Anghierra, which balanced that of Michael Angelo, unfortunately disappeared during the troubles of Florence, and nothing is left of it save a fragment engraved by Ederlinck from a drawing by Rubens. Unquestionably Rubens is a great master, but the character of his genius is absolutely the opposite of that of Leonardo, and the engraving shows that the Antwerp painter exaggerated the contours in Flemish fashion, made the horses' quarters heavier, and vulgarised in his own way the strange faces of the horsemen. Gentleness, serenity, grace — a proud, tender grace — were the chief quali-

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ties of Leonardo. He invented — or rather, found in nature — a beauty as perfect as Greek beauty but in no wise related to it. He was the only artist who managed to be beautiful without being antique, and therein lies his highest merit; for all who ignored these eternal beauties, the canons of the ideal, or who departed from them, are marked by barbarism or decadence. Leonardo da Vinci preserved Gothic delicacy, while animating it with a purely modern spirit. If Dante proceeds from Virgil, Leonardo is our own painter. Da Vinci's figures seem to come from the highest spheres to behold themselves in a mirror of burnished steel in which their image will remain fixed eternally by a secret like that of the daguerreotype. They have already been seen, but not on earth, — in some anterior existence perhaps, which they faintly recall.

How else can be explained the singular, almost magical charm exercised by the portrait of Mona Lisa upon the least enthusiastic natures? Is it her beauty? Many faces by Raphael and other painters are much more correct. She is not even young, and her age must be that beloved of Balzac, thirty. Through the curious delicacy of the modelling shows already a cer-

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tain fatigue, and life has left its mark upon that peach-bloom cheek. The dress, through the darkening of the colours, has become almost that of a widow; crape descends down the face with the hair. But the sagacious, deep, velvety glance, full of promise, irresistibly entrances and intoxicates, while the sinuous, serpentine mouth, turned up at the corners in a violet penumbra, rallies one with such gentleness, grace, and superiority, that one feels as timid as a school-boy in the presence of a duchess. So the head, with its violet shadows, half-perceived as through a black gauze, makes you dream for hours and pursues you in memory like the motif of a symphony. Under the form expressed is felt a vague, indefinite, inexpressible thought like a musical thought; one is moved and troubled; images which have already been seen pass before one's gaze, confused and soft, smile familiarly, and whisper languorous confidences in your ear. Repressed desire and desperate hopes struggle painfully through a luminous shadow; and you discover that your melancholy springs from the fact that the Gioconda received, three hundred years ago, the confession of your love with the same sarcastic smile which she still wears to-day.

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While Mona Lisa del Gioconda posed, — and she posed a long time, for Leonardo was not the man to hurry with such a model, — musicians performed concertos in the studio. The master desired to retain by music and joyous conversation the smile ready to leave those lovely lips, in order to fix it forever upon his canvas. Does it not seem that there is in the portrait of the Gioconda, without seeking to play on tones and notes, something of the echo of the musical impression? The effect is soft, veiled and tender, mysterious and harmonious, and the remembrance of the adorable face pursues one like certain motives of Mozart, which the soul sings softly to console itself for unknown misfortunes.

All the gods of painting thus seize upon our soul and play forever in it a divine music, the echo of the radiant, superhuman world in which beauty appears to us.

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Esteban Bartolome Murillo

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ESTEBAN BARTOLOME MURILLO

MURILLO and Velasquez together express fully the realistic and mystical art of Spain. Velasquez depicted men, Murillo painted angels; the one took the earth, the other the heavens; each had his own realm and ruled over it. Murillo's reputation is wider than that of Philip IV's painter. The reason is that his work was not absorbed in its entirety by a royal patron who jealously guarded it. He had no studio at the palace, he had no office at court, and was not a knight of any order. His lower, but also less circumscribed position, brought him into direct connection with the public from whom he accepted orders, a number of which he found it difficult to execute in spite of the incessant labour which filled his life. Undoubtedly he often allowed his quick brush to run along too fast, and could not bestow the same care upon all his paintings; but necessity, which has its disadvantages, has also its compensations. It compels an artist to bring out his whole talent, and develops

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unsuspected resources in him. For the painter, it multiplies the chances of ultimate fame by the number of paintings which are scattered throughout Europe in museums and galleries. If the master whose work is composed of a few rare, exquisite, finished works marked by perfection, is worthy of admiration, even more worthy of it is the fertile artist who, with the profuseness of genius, scatters with ready hand beautiful things as if they cost him nothing; and that is what Murillo did. It would be a difficult, if not an impossible task, to draw up a catalogue of all his works. The list of his masterpieces alone is a very long one.

The story of his life presents no dramatic incidents, and may be told in a few lines. He was born at Seville, and was baptised in the parish church of Saint Mary Magdalen, January 1, 1618; and not in the town of Pilar, as Palomino believed; led into the error, no doubt, by the fact that Murillo's wife came from that place and owned some property there. His father was called Gaspar Esteban Murillo, his mother, Maria Perez. As all the forebears of that family had borne the name Esteban, it is supposed to have been the generic name of the family.

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ESTEBAN BARTOLOME MURILLO

The instinct for painting manifested itself early in Esteban: the artist showed in the child, and when he was old enough his father placed him in the studio of Juan del Castillo to learn the art. As Castillo was a good draughtsman, he made the lad study carefully along this line, and then imparted to him his dry colouring, which smacks somewhat of the Florentine style, introduced into Seville by Luis de Vargas, Pedro de Villegas, and other teachers. Such were the beginnings of Murillo. His rapid progress amazed his master, for the boy was marvellously endowed and predestined to be a painter.

Juan del Castillo having settled in Cadiz, Murillo began to paint alone, as pot-boilers, whatever dealers asked him. In this way he acquired great practice and a pleasanter, though still mannered, colouring. There are preserved in Seville three of his paintings of this time: the first in a corner of the cloister of the College de Regina, another in a corner of the great cloister of the Convent of San Francesco, and the third on the altar of the chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary in the College of San Diego.

He was only twenty-four when there passed through Seville, Pedro de Moya, the painter, who was going

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from London to Granada, after having learned from Van Dyck the elevated taste and the splendid colouring of that artist. Esteban was greatly taken with his breadth of style and suavity of manner, and proposed to imitate it; but Pedro de Moya did not make a long stay in Seville, and the young artist fell back into his former uncertainty, doubtful as to the way he should follow in order to become a great master. He wished to go to London, but learned that Van Dyck had just died. Italy presented itself to his imagination, with all its art treasures and the lessons of its masterpieces; but it was a very long and costly voyage which he could not dream of attempting, as he lacked both protectors and pecuniary resources.

At last he found a middle way, which his courage and resolution enabled him to carry out. He purchased a piece of canvas, and cut it in pieces, upon which he painted devotional subjects which he sold to the saints-exporters, who were numerous at Seville, and who carried on this trade with South America. If sometimes, in some South American church, the traveller stops in surprise before a Madonna, the sublime head of which stands out from a hasty composition, from among figures painted with a quick touch, no doubt he is gazing

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at an unknown Murillo, one of those pieces of canvas illumined by a flash of genius.

Having reached Madrid, he called upon his compatriot Velasquez, and told him the reasons which had led him to leave Seville, and his wish to perfect himself in the study of painting. Velasquez, whose high rank never made him proud or inaccessible, warmly welcomed Murillo, gave him access to the royal collections, and procured permission for him to copy at the Escorial such paintings as he pleased. The young artist turned this to account, and spent two years in studying drawing and painting from the works of Titian, Rubens, Van Dyck, Ribera, and Velasquez. The result shows how much labour and application were manifested by the pupil who was busy turning into a master. On his return to Seville in 1645, he astounded artists by the paintings which he produced the following year for the little cloister of San Francesco. No one understood where and under whom he had acquired that new, masterly, unknown style of which there was no model and no teacher. He recalled in his paintings the three masters whom he had proposed to imitate in Madrid. "The Angels' Kitchen" recalls Ribera; the "Death of Saint Clare," Van Dyck; "San Diego and

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the Beggars," Velasquez; but in each and all there is the unmistakable note of originality.

These works gained him undoubted reputation, and brought him numerous public and private orders. At the very first attempt, he had become the head of the Seville school, and no one has since taken that position from him. Along with glory, wealth came to him, and he was entitled to think of marriage. He took to wife Donna Beatrix de Cabrera y Sotomayor, of the town of Pilar, who was in every respect a suitable match for him. The marriage took place in 1648. From this time, either in consequence of the extreme facility he gained through continual practice, or because of a desire to please the public, he changed his strong, sustained style for a franker, more tender manner, more agreeable often to connoisseurs, and in which he painted the chief and most esteemed paintings from his hand which are admired at Seville.

Such are "Saint Leander" and "Saint Isidore," larger than life, in pontifical vestments, seated, and placed in the sacristy of the cathedral. A manuscript of the time reveals the fact that Saint Leander is a portrait of the licentiate Alonzo de Herrera, treasurer of the choir, and Saint Isidore that of the licentiate

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Juan Lop[illegible]van. These pictures were executed
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Saint Anthony of Padua.

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Juan Lopez Talavan. These pictures were executed in 1655, at the request of the Archdeacon of Carmona, Don Juan Federigui, who presented them to the chapter. The famous "Saint Anthony of Padua," which is possibly Murillo's masterpiece, and which is placed upon the altar of the baptistery of the cathedral, was painted in the following year. I saw at Seville that marvellous picture, which the Duke of Wellington, during the Spanish War, offered to cover with gold ounces if the church would sell it to him; but the proud chapter refused. The sum must have been enormous, for the picture is very large. The worthy canons are to be honoured for having thought more highly of a masterpiece than of a whole heap of gold.

Murillo showed in this picture that he was the equal of the greatest masters. He fills with a single real being the whole of the vast frame just as if he had numerous groups of figures at his command. The pious hallucination of the saint is felt by the spectator; what the saint dreams the spectator sees, the heavens open for the one as for the other; the walls of the humble cell disappear, and in the silvery, bluish atmosphere of the vision float, like luminous waves, thoroughly

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supernatural, winged beings, so immaterial that painting could not have been deemed capable of reproducing them. The Infant Jesus is adorable in His childish and caressing artlessness. He holds out, as a nursling to its mother, His pretty, round arms to Saint Anthony in ecstasy; but one feels easily that this is no ordinary child: the uncreated light beams from His delicate flesh made of the lilies and roses of paradise. This picture, of such ethereal mysticism, intoxicates like the vapours of incense.

This power of translating the marvellous in a way that makes itself felt is noticeable in the paintings which Murillo executed in 1665, to the order of the fervent prebend, Don Justino Neve, for the church of Santa Maria Bianca. These two paintings, which no doubt were intended to fit in arches, are rounded in the upper portion. I saw them at the Royal Academy at Madrid. The first represents the vision of the Roman patrician and his wife concerning the building of Santa Maggiore at Rome; the second, the couple relating their vision to the Pope.

In a hall, the architecture of which is superb and bathed in shadow, and through one part of which is discerned the gray sky of evening, the Roman patrician

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and his wife are sleeping, sunk in supernatural slumber, for they are fully dressed and have not had time to reach their bed. The husband sleeps leaning on a table covered with a red carpet, on which are carelessly thrown a book and a piece of white linen. His head, resting on his hand, is serious and thoughtful, and illumined by the reflection of the vision. It is plain, though his eyelids are closed, that he beholds with the eye of the soul a celestial apparition. His doublet of sombre colour and his black gown, the folds of which are held in his free hand, are dulled in tones skilfully deadened in order to bring out the face. Somewhat nearer the back of the room slumbers his wife, in an easy, graceful attitude, her head on the edge of the bed and her cheek on a handkerchief. Her maroon bodice with slashed epaulets shows a blue sleeve, and on the edge of her red skirt, glazed with lake, rests a little Havana poodle, unconscious of what is happening. At the foot of a pilaster stands a work-basket filled with rose and white stuffs. All this part of the painting is calm, silent, slumberous; it might be called terrestrial on account of its artless and almost familiar reality; but in the upper portion towards the left, blazes, in all its splendour, the vision itself. The Virgin, in a

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halo, supported by delicate clouds filled with light, is descending with the Child Jesus, and with her hand outstretched towards the country-side, seems to indicate the place where the future church is to rise. The aerial group has a surprising and ideal grace and colouring which is also absolutely true. Too much admiration cannot be felt for the art Murillo displayed in filling with three personages only a canvas of such great dimensions, in which he has introduced nothing not closely connected with the subject.

No less ingenious is the composition of the second painting. In the foreground on the left, on a throne upon a platform surmounted by a dais of crimson velvet, Pope Liberio is seen in profile, in half shadow, listening in an attitude of admiration to the recital of the vision told him by the pair. Near him a table with a velvet cloth fringed with gold, on which are placed a flagon and a bell, forms a strong contrast. The light falls behind the Pope, and touches a lady dressed in a rose-coloured gown with *glacis* of straw, the most delicious colour. To visit His Holiness, the patrician's wife has put on her gala dress. She has a string of pearls round her neck, and her graceful headdress sets off her beauty, more Andalusian perhaps than

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Roman, but incomparably charming. Kneeling by her husband, she appears to confirm the story of the vision. The patrician, in a doublet of brown velvet, black mantle, cap in hand, one knee bent, explains how the Holy Virgin has appeared to him, and pointed out the place where a new church is to be built.

Between the Pope and this group, against a well lighted architectural background, is seen an old prelate in white cloak and robes leaning on his crutch and placing spectacles on his nose in order to lose nothing of the scene. A brown-robed monk is placed behind him and sets him off by his dress.

This is not all the painting, as might be supposed. As in plans which represent the section of a building, Murillo has cut off the wall of the room that contains the principal scene, and separated by an elegant pillar the secondary one. Outside the hall is seen the country-side where winds the procession, ascending to the snow-covered spot which the Virgin points to from heaven, and which is to be the site of the temple. The perfection of the gradual diminution of the personages as they grow more distant from the spectator, and as their double file disappears on the horizon behind, is much admired. The brilliancy of the sky, blazing

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with light, is rendered with an intensity of warmth which brings out still more strongly the miracle of the snow unmelted by the burning summer.

Double subjects in the same picture were allowed in those days; since then they have been proscribed by more severe art. They do not shock me in the smallest degree, especially when an artist knows, like Murillo, how to place them side by side without confounding or separating them too completely. In this case the procession is subordinated to the principal subject of which it is the consequence, and is kept discreetly in the middle distance and background. The focus of the painting is the Roman lady with her charming head and her dress radiant with rosy light; she it is who first attracts the glance, which then falls upon the husband, afterwards on the Pope, and follows, when it has seen everything, the procession until it loses itself in the distance.

In this same church Murillo painted two other pictures in arched form, placed in the other naves, also at the expense of Don Justino Neve: the one a "Conception" on the Gospel side, the other "Faith" on the Epistle side.

The painting known by the curious name of "The Angels' Kitchen," which formed part of the collection

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of Marshal Soult, and which is now in the Louvre, is an additional example of Murillo's skill in mingling without discords the miraculous and the real. His lively faith helped him in this respect, for he never dreamed of criticising the introduction of the divine into the positive. The oblong form of the painting compelled the artist to divide his composition into three groups skilfully connected one with another. The story, or to speak more religiously, the curious miracle represented in this painting is well known. Catholic Spain, where the care for the soul leads so easily to forgetfulness of the body, has at all times been a land of hunger, and even among worldly people the stranger is amazed at a sobriety which elsewhere would amount to austere fasting. Rabelaisian tales of the gross feeding of the monks are scarcely in place in Spain. So the brethren of the convent in which Murillo has laid the scene of his painting often lacked the absolute necessities of life. The saint — I forget his name — would turn to prayer and, upborne on the wings of ecstacy, kneel in mid-air, like Saint Magdalen in the "Balm," imploring the pity of heaven upon the starving community. Then angels descended, bringing food to the poor monks. Murillo's deep and serious faith

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did not make him hesitate to treat all this part of the composition in the most real, or as would be said nowadays, the most realistic manner. Two great angels with azure, rosy wings, the down of which still flutters with the breath of paradise, bear, the one a heavy bag of victuals, the other a quarter of meat that might have just been taken from a butcher's stall. Other angels, heavenly cooks, to the great surprise of the *chef*, are crushing garlic in a mortar, stirring up the fire in the ovens, looking after the *olla podrida*, laying the table, polishing the copper vessels with an artless and noble grace that Murillo alone was capable of reproducing. In the foreground, cherubs hold baskets filled with cucumbers, onions, tomatoes, red peppers, and the various vegetables of hot countries, the brilliant colours of which I used to admire on the market stalls during my trip through Spain. At the corner of the picture shine stewpans, pots, frying-pans, a whole kitchen battery which might well make jealous the Dutch art that gazes at its own reflection in a caldron; but these are painted with the masterly breadth of an historic picture. At the other end a monk, no doubt the superior of the convent, cautiously leads in a hidalgo, a knight of Saint James and Calatrava, whom he desires

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to witness the miracle. Behind the knight is a personage whose head greatly resembles Murillo, and who may well be the painter himself. These three heads, especially the monk's, are marvels. They are living; they come out of the canvas and reveal, in their deeply Spanish types, the whole story of their religion, their country, and their civilisation.

"The Nativity of the Virgin" is a charming painting, piously and tenderly familiar, that stays the smile on the lips of the incredulous, if any such could be found before a painting by Murillo. It also presents that easy mingling of the supernatural and the real, that simple relationship between heaven and earth, which distinguish the master of Seville from other religious painters. In the centre of the composition, like a bouquet of flowers, lighted up by a sunbeam, the little Virgin floats in brilliant light. An old matron — a *tia*, as the Spanish call her — supports the cradle with a caressing gesture. A handsome girl, dressed in lilac, tender green, and straw-colour, with a white, satiny arm marked on the elbow with a red touch, bends curiously and gazes at the frail creature. But the most graceful figure in the group is a youthful angel, modelled out of nothing, a rose vapour glazed

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with silver, coquettishly inclining a most adorable head, done with three strokes of the brush, and pressing to its breast a long slender hand lost in the folds of the stuff as in the petals of a flower. Near a chair, on the spectator's left, is a little dog, a Havana poodle, with long, silky coat as white as snow, — a thoroughbred, worthy of being carried on a marchioness's muff. Paolo Veronese never fails to put a greyhound in his pictures; Murillo, when decorum allows, likes to put in a Havana poodle playing or asleep. These little familiar details guard against monotony.

Above the Virgin's cradle hovers a glory of angels, scattered through the room like luminous smoke, every flake of which is a charming, smiling head. In the background, in the shadow, is faintly seen a curtained bed in which rests the mother.

It is surely impossible to see anything more fresh, tender and lovely than this painting, executed with the airy boldness of a talent sure of rendering without an effort the charming ideas which occur to it. Over this beautiful canvas floats, as it were, the smile of Andalusian grace.

But what shall I say of that marvel, called simply "Murillo's Virgin," which blooms like a white pure lily

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in the great Salon Carré of the Louvre, amid the nosegay of masterpieces selected from the loveliest flowers of art? The Virgin, one foot on the crescent moon, robed in a tunic as white as light, draped in a blue mantle that seems a piece of heaven, rises in the splendour of the Assumption, light, immaterial, rosy as the vapour of dawn, accompanied by cherubs that joy and flutter around her, pearly, golden, transparent, in every attitude which aerial beings traversing impalpable ether may assume.

In the "Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" we return to the most commonplace reality; from angels we pass to scurfy beings, but art, like Christian charity, is not repelled by anything. Whatever it touches becomes pure, noble, divine; and out of this disgusting subject Murillo has evolved a masterpiece. The head of the saint is wrapped in a sort of white veil that frames in the delicate oval of her face in its ascetic folds, and falls over her bosom like a nun's collar. At court, she leads as far as possible the life of the cloister; but on the semi-monastic veil sparkles a dainty crown denoting the queen, and a halo denoting the saint. Standing on the threshold of her palace, she welcomes her company of poor, sick, and infirm. It is the

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hour for dressing their wounds. On a footstool is placed a great silver basin filled with water over which bends a poor child whose insufficient rags allow its thin shoulders and sickly body to be seen. He presents his head, covered with scabs, bloody, denuded by scurf, to the lovely royal hands white as the Host, that are sponging the loathsome wounds with respectful precaution, for the poor little wretch may be Jesus Christ in person. But if she is a saint, she is none the less a woman: a delicate, charming woman who feels aversion, repugnance, and disgust. The hideous aspect of the ulcers, the fetid odour they give forth, inspire in Saint Elizabeth a horror that she triumphantly overcomes; her celestial face expresses at once the revolt of nature and the triumph of charity. This double expression, so feminine and so Christian, is a mark of Murillo's genius. A painter less thoroughly Catholic than he could not have found it. A head so sublime effaces all wretchedness and all ugliness.

Two young girls accompany the queen, and help her in her pious occupation. One of them holds a salver bearing flagons, boxes of ointment, and lint; another replenishes from a silver-gilt ewer the water in the silver basin. Nothing can be too fine for the poor.

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On the lowest step is seated an old woman in rags, whose sunken profile stands out with singular boldness against the violet velvet of the queen's gown. In the foreground, close to the frame, a beggar is replacing the bandages on his leg, while at the back a cripple is hurrying up on his crutches. In the very background, through an architecture like that of Veronese, are seen the queen and her women waiting upon the poor at table. Lazarus is welcomed in this hospitable palace.

Thus among the Spanish artists, the most ethereal sublimity in no wise excludes realism, and the same painter who has just exhibited ecstasy in glory, opened the heavens and shown their depths peopled with angels, is not ashamed to paint a little beggar hunting fleas in a hovel. Has he not a soul, that little beggar boy of Murillo's? Let a sunbeam slip upon the wall that shelters him and be deflected upon him, he will be worth more than all the pale imitations of antiquity.

There is in Seville the Hospital de la Caridad, where reposes the famous Juan de Marana, who is no fabulous personage as might be supposed, with this inscription over him: "Here lies the worst man that ever was."

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In this hospital are to be seen several very important paintings by Murillo. Although the "Piscina at Jericho" and the "Return of the Prodigal Son" passed into the gallery of Marshal Soult, "The Multiplying of the Loaves" and "Moses Striking the Rock," great compositions filled with figures, and "Saint John de Deo" bearing a dead man, have not left the places they occupied; but "The Angel delivering Saint Peter," "Abraham worshipping Three Angels," and "Saint Elizabeth of Hungary" have been removed to become the ornament of museums and galleries. "Saint John de Deo," sunk under the burden of the body he is going to bury, and which the fiend enjoys making heavier in order to play him a trick, is of fantastic and tremendous effect. The magic *chiaroscuro* adds to the terror of the scene, and brings out in all its beauty the lovely angel hastening to the help of the saint crushed under the weight of that lugubrious cross. Murillo, in spite of the suavity of his style, the grace of his brush, the freshness of his colour, can be terrible at need. He is no more afraid of horror than of triviality. No further proof of this is needed for those who have not seen the "Saint John de Deo" than "Saint Boniface Returning after His Death to finish His

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Memoirs," one of the strangest paintings in the Spanish school. In this composition Murillo is as gloomily poetic as the sombre Valdes Leal, whose paintings, "Death" and "The Two Bodies," give a shudder to the visitors at the Hospital de la Caridad. A phantom with lack-lustre eyes, of a livid pallor, whose hand is yellower than the parchment on which it writes tremblingly, produces an unforgettable impression, and gives one a sense of the other world. I note this point, though it is rare in Murillo, for it is too thoroughly Spanish and Catholic to be omitted.

Every great painter has his type of Madonna in which he incarnates his idealised dream of beauty. The Madonna represented by Murillo is a pretty Andalusian, idealised no doubt, but the models of which may still be met with at the Cristina or *del Duque*. This is no reproach, for nothing is lovelier than the Seville woman, with her luminous eyes, her brilliant complexion, and her crimson lips. It does not take much for a painter of genius to turn her into an absolutely celestial creature. To prevent her from being too amiable, too graceful, too seductive, all he needs is modestly to cast down the glance and to draw over a fold of the veil. At other times an expression of fer-

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vent, ecstatic piety beams from the lovely black eyes raised to heaven, and turns the woman into a saint, the mother into a Madonna.

Murillo treats the Infant Jesus with caressing adoration, and when painting Him finds tones that seem not to belong to a terrestrial palette. With the grace, the smile, and the artlessness of childhood, he also retains the glance of the God; it is plain that the plump child standing on His mother's lap is not of our own race; and that the human form envelopes Him like a transparent veil. Whether He be shown to the shepherds, clad in skins of beasts and followed by their tawny dogs, whether He welcomes the little Saint John that holds out his arms to Him, whether He makes the house dog bark at the bird which He holds in His hand, or whether He sleeps upon His cross, the future instrument of His death, He has always about Him a glory that denotes the Son of God. Melancholy and precocious indeed is the thought in "Jesus with the Sheep;" and noble is the grace in the "Saint John and Jesus." Mary's Son is making, with affable kindness, his grateful little companion drink out of a shell filled with water. He looks like a king's son interested in a humble friend.

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"The Annunciation" in the Museum in Madrid is a perfect marvel of colour. The Virgin and the angel kneeling before her have for a background a choir of angels as luminous as the sun, and upon the background, like a stellar flame, flames the Holy Ghost, brighter, whiter, more sparkling still, a light with luminous shadows.

Every church and convent in Seville was full of masterpieces by Murillo. It is terrifying to read in Cean Bermudez the list of his innumerable paintings. They are to be found in the cathedral, in the parish churches of Saint Andrew, Saint Thomas, in the Queen of Angels, in San Francesco, in Santa Maria Bianca, in the Merced Calzada, in the Capuchins, at the Caridad, at the Venerables, in the archiepiscopal palace, in the Carthusian Monastery; and this without reckoning the works scattered throughout the churches of Carmona, Cordova, Granada, Rioseco, Madrid, Vitoria, in the New Palace, Saint Ildefonso, and the Escorial. Such prodigious facility, such unquenchable fecundity confound the imagination.

Having completed these works, Murillo went to Cadiz to paint the "Marriage of Saint Catherine," an important composition for the altar of the Capuchins in

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that city. While at work he fell from his scaffolding and hurt himself rather seriously; so was compelled to return to Seville, where he spent the rest of his life in suffering. He was then living near the parish church of the Holy Cross, and often, it is said, he would remain for many hours in prayer before the famous "Descent from the Cross" by Pedro Campana. One day the sacristan asked him why he had remained so long in that chapel. He answered, "I am waiting until these holy personages have finished bringing down our Lord from the cross."

Shortly afterwards his condition grew worse, he received the sacraments, and died April 3, 1682, in the arms of his friend and disciple, Don Pedro Nunez de Villavicencio, Knight of the Order of Saint John. He was buried in that very chapel under the painting of the "Descent from the Cross" which he admired so much.

Murillo's character was amiable and kindly. He was interested in his pupils, and kept none of the secrets of his art from them. He founded an academy of painting at Seville. In order to establish it, he managed to overcome the grim pride of Valdes Leal, the envy of Francesco Herrera the Younger, and the other

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artists in the city; he induced them to second his efforts with their money and their experience. Thus was constituted by him the School of Seville, known by its amiable and natural style, its fresh and warm colouring, its richly splendid contours, its graceful types of women and children marked by the smiling Andalusian charm. As for him, in spite of his imitators, he remained inimitable, whether they attempted to copy his cold, his warm, or his vaporous manner, — for thus do the Spanish designate the three styles which he often mingled in the same picture. What could not be copied was his genius.

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Sir Joshua Reynolds

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SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

REYNOLDS possesses the gift of grace. He knows how to represent, in their utmost delicacy, female loveliness and the bloom of childhood, and as if conscious of that precious faculty, he delighted in painting women and children. So, in order to depict and appreciate him, I shall place before the eyes of my reader a painting in which are brought together the child and the woman, — the "Portrait of the Viscountess Galway and her son."

With the boldness of a great master, Reynolds has not planted his models motionless in the centre of the painting; they enter from the side, continuing the action begun without, and leaving empty before them, contrary to rule, a rather broad space. The Viscountess, bearing on her shoulder her boy of three or four years of age, rushes into the picture which she is about to traverse. But now she was invisible; presently she will vanish; she is not posing, she is passing, and the artist seems to have caught her as she went by. She

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is a young woman, scarcely fully developed, with much of the virgin and the angel, a rose of yesterday with a single bud. Her head, in profile, or rather nearly in three-quarters, stands out against the warm autumn tints of the foliage like the milky vein of a cameo against the redder colour of the agate. Her hair, slightly powdered, is dressed high in the fashion of the day, showing the roots. A scarf of gauze rayed with gold, gracefully knotted under her chin, forms her head-dress. From behind the ear, rosy and pearly as a shell, escapes a long curl. Not having received the perfumed snow, or having shaken it off, this lock is browner than the hair and brings out wonderfully the alabaster whiteness of the neck and the rosy fairness of the cheek. Vermilion relief lights improve the mouth and the nostrils of the opal-like profile, on which the long eyelashes alone cast a fluttering shadow. The costume is charmingly cool and simple,—a dress of white muslin and a jacket of rose taffeta. Over her shoulder the Viscountess holds out to her baby, in order to support him, a slender, diaphanous, aristocratically elegant hand, full of life in its patrician pallor, and such as a great colourist like Reynolds alone could paint.

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The child is marvellous. With his straw hat, that forms a halo as if he were an Infant Jesus, he leans his chin upon his mother's shoulder with the astonished and delighted look of a child that is being carried. A satiny light lustres his brow, shaded by nascent fair hair; in his little rosy round face his two blue eyes look like two corn-flowers planted in a bouquet of roses.

The remainder of the picture represents a park in which the red tints of sunset mingle under the boughs with the warm, low tones of the autumnal palette.

It will readily be believed that Reynolds does not attain this delicate grace by finish and brushing. He paints, on the contrary, in a thick *impasto*, with the first touch, with a brush the free handling of which is plain. He is robust, almost violent in his tenderness and exquisiteness. Almost all his tones are pure, planted boldly, with the rapid decision of a great master quick to seize on nature. The accessories and backgrounds partake in their clever carelessness of sketching and scene painting. Nowhere does polish efface the touch which is the signature of genius.

The "Portrait of the Princess Sophia Matilda" as a child is adorable. The little princess, utterly careless

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of her dignity, is lying flat on the grass, her knees drawn up under her, her feet bare, one hand on the ground, and the other playing with the silky hair of a dog that she holds by the neck, choking him, and which allows her to do so with the friendly patience that dogs exhibit towards little children, no doubt because the latter go on all fours as they do, and they regard them as brothers. A white dress with a pink sash, a muslin cap with a bow of the same colour as the sash, form the costume of the dainty princess. The painter, who desired to represent her with the artless grace of childhood, no doubt forbade finery, gewgaws, and adornment. Charming indeed is the head with the white brow shaded on its contours by the wild hair that looks like the down of a seraphic aureole recently fallen, the plump, dimpled cheeks, flushed with rose, and the great fixed, deep, limpid eyes swimming in a blue light in which the amazement of innocence simulates reverie and thought. The "Portrait of the Princess Sophia Matilda" could well be placed by the side of Velasquez' "Infanta Marguerite."

The painting known as "The Age of Innocence" is an additional proof of Reynolds' power to represent the pure charm of children which have as yet only drunk

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the milk of life. "The Age of Innocence" is represented by a little girl of four or five years of age, squatting on her heels, crossing her fat, rosy, soft hands with a pretty, childish motion, and showing her irregular, saucy profile against a patch of blue in a stormy sky that forms the background to the figure. The hair, tied with a pale rose ribbon, is of that English auburn which, when painted by Reynolds, equals Venetian auburn. A stray ringlet casts the shadow of its soft curl upon the springtime bloom of the cheek, and brings out the vigorous tones under the chin; for it is not by a sickly mingling of lilies and roses that the artist obtains the ideal carnation which is to be seen only in England, where children are cultivated like flowers. He fills it with golden light, and the white of the gowns is golden like the linen in Titian's paintings. Indeed, Reynolds further resembles Titian in the noble taste and richness of tone of the landscape which he usually employs as backgrounds for his portraits.

Although "The Age of Innocence" is a famous painting, I myself prefer the "Portrait of Miss Boothby as a Child." It is a masterpiece of simplicity, of ingenuousness and colour. She is represented as a

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little girl seated; her hands, on which she wears mittens, are crossed. She is at the foot of a grove through which one sees in an opening a bit of sky in the corner of the painting. Her dress is white, the broad black sash forms almost a waist, and she wears a mob cap with a black ribbon. Her red gold hair is cut squarely across the brow, which is bathed in a silvery, transparent half tint, and two curls fall down the cheeks. The eyes, of that gray in which mingle the azure of the sky and the glaucous green of the sea, are filled with an indefinable expression of quiet ingenuousness and reverie. Never was a child's rosy complexion painted in finer, more supple, and more firm *impasto*, in colours more suave and solid at the same time. The whole figure has a local, pearly gray tone warmed with amber, brightened with rose, which is enchanting in its harmony. The particular critic could only object to some heaviness in the whites.

"Simplicity," which is the portrait of Lady Gatwyn as a child, is not equal to the one I have just described, but it is very charming too. How admirably effective is the light falling on the little girl dressed in white, her bust turned to the spectator, and her head in profile!

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Her little hands are playing with a rose, that stands out bright against the stormy, warm background of trees and clouds.

Delightful also is the "Portrait of Miss Rice," a little shepherdess of nine or ten years, leading her sheep through a park adorned with marble vases. She wears a short rose-coloured dress puffed out over a skirt of blue taffeta, and white satin shoes with great rosettes. The pastoral disguise in no wise diminishes the candour of the little girl, who is delighted with her costume.

Let me also mention the picture in which, under the title of "Angels' Heads," the artist has brought together the children of Lady Londonderry, hovering in a blue sky with their little cherubs' wings. They are indeed celestial heads, and the painting is a gracious apotheosis of childhood, so loved, so petted, and so worshipped in England.

I have said enough to prove that Sir Joshua Reynolds knows how to paint children. Now let me come to his portraits of women.

One of the most singularly attractive is that of "Nelly O'Brien." It at once attracts the eye and retains it long through the strange scale of tones the artist chose for his painting. It is almost a monochrome,

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or rather, it is composed of neutral tints that recall Leonardo da Vinci's "Mona Lisa." The head, of silvery pallor, is bathed in grayish shadows; the neck, wholly in *chiaroscuro*, has pearly reflections on which gleams faintly the pearl necklace; the uncovered bosom is flushed with white light, and the flesh tones blend with the tone of the puffed chemisette. Bracelets, starred with sombre garnets, circle, at the wrists and above the elbow, arms of a tone between that of marble and ivory. It is difficult to say exactly what is the tint of the dress, or rather, of the drapery that envelops the rest of the body. It is an indefinable colour, an unnamable tone, as artists say; a preparation of grisaille glazed with mauve-rose, violet, and sienna, with an anticipated patina. Nelly O'Brien leans upon a sort of low wall in which is set a bas-relief faintly visible. The wall is of a tawny gray. The background consists of trees of a dull, soft, sleepy russet, that bring out by their sombre richness the actress's almost wan head. The expression of the lovely face is almost troubling. Enigmatical archness sparkles in the shadowed eyes, and the lips are curled by a mysterious smile in which the mind seems to laugh at love; nevertheless, voluptuousness is the dominating note, but

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a voluptuousness as formidable as the beauty of the sphinx.

In another portrait which is more of a study, Reynolds, still under the influence of da Vinci, has depicted a woman carrying an infant child on her shoulder. The two figures, superb in colouring, have the brown shadows, the delicate modelling, the curious faun-like smile, and the deep glance characteristic of the rare masterpieces of the inimitable master. In "The Schoolboy" with books under his arms, the intense warmth of the tones, the magic of the *chiaroscuro*, the abruptness of the high lights, indicate a study of Rembrandt, and his methods.

Although Reynolds had the true painter's temperament, he was also thoroughly acquainted with the æsthetics of the art and carefully thought out its principles, though he was apt to forget them once he took up the brush. The influence of several masters is visible in his work, but happily its remote effect did not diminish his own originality. Whether he tries to imitate Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, or Murillo, he still remains an Englishman. Most English, indeed, is the "Portrait of Lady Charlotte Spencer" in her riding dress. With her curly hair blown about by the wind,

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her cheeks flushed, her eyes raised to heaven, her cherry lips half opened, she is a characteristic heroine of sport. A muslin tie with embroidered ends is loosely fastened around her neck; her red jacket, braided with gold, shows a vest of white piqué; she wears suède gloves; in one hand holds an elegant veiled hat, and with the other, amicably thrown over the neck of the horse, pets and encourages the handsome animal by the side of which she has alighted in a forest drive full of satiny, moss-covered ash trunks. It is not, properly speaking, an equestrian portrait, for scarcely more than the head and chest of the horse are seen, and Lady Charlotte herself is in three-quarters length.

"Miss Elizabeth Forster," with her black head-dress, powdered hair, bright and arch glance, her nose wittily touched on the end with an unexpected facet, her broad *mezzetino* collar, her white dress with gauze sleeves, fastened around the waist with a blue-black sash, is another very piquant portrait, and stands boldly out of one of those sombre backgrounds that Reynolds was so fond of.

It was a charming fancy that determined the pose of Kitty Fisher as "Cleopatra." There is nothing antique about the painting, and the Egyptian local

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colour is treated with an indifference to anachronism comparable to that of Paolo Veronese. The young Cleopatra, no doubt in order to outdo in prodigality some Mark Antony of the House of Lords, throws, with the most graceful movement of the fingers that a coquette with a pretty hand could imagine, a large pearl into a richly chased gold cup. Her whole costume is gray and white adorned with pinkings, knots, and buttons. The head is seen almost in three-quarters. Black eyebrows over eyes of a vague blue, full of witty fire and charm, set off a white and rose complexion which anywhere but in England, the country of fine blood, could be obtained only by the use of cosmetics.

I need not speak of the "Child Samuel." Every one is acquainted with that charming, kneeling figure, popular through engravings.

As a studied portrait, that of "Lady Georgiana Spencer" has a very exquisite quality, elegance, high breeding, brilliant execution. The lovely lady, with her hair puffed up and adorned with white and red feathers, heavily powdered, dressed in a splendid court dress of white satin fringed with gold, descends a rich staircase with a baluster, with an air at once careless and majestic. The gesture of the hand which seeks the

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skirt to raise it somewhat is thoroughly charming and feminine.

In the style which might be called illustrative, the portrait of "Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse" is quite remarkable. The illustrious actress, wearing a brocade dress draped with crape, is seated on a stage throne in the act of reciting her lines. Behind her, in the shadow of the background, are faintly perceived the tragic larvæ, Fear, and Pity.

We meet again, in another canvas, but this time in the intimacy of private life, the splendid Lady Georgiana Spencer, Duchess of Devonshire. She is dressed in black, with powdered hair, set off by a curtain of red damask drawn back. She is teasing with her finger a little child standing in her lap, putting out, as if to defend itself, a pretty, plump, rosy arm. The child wears a white dress with a black sash. The background consists of a column round which a curtain is thrown, a marble vase, and a sort of window festooned with a few tendrils of ivy through which a bit of sky is seen. The portrait is full of life, light, and colour. Van Dyck, after touching it up here and there, might well sign it.

I have dwelt at length on Reynolds' portraits of

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women and children, because it appears to me that therein lie his true genius and his genuine originality. This does not mean, however, that he did not also paint men very well. The proof is obtained by a glance at the group of portraits representing "Lord Donegal, Mr. Barry, and Mr. Baring" seated around a green table, "Viscount Althorp," "The Marquis of Rockingham," and "The Marquis of Hastings," every one painted in a very masterly and grand style.

Reynolds was also an historical painter, but I have not had the opportunity of seeing many of this class of works by him. "Cymon and Iphigenia," a mythological subject the meaning of which I fail to fathom, is one of his most admired paintings. Under the shadow of a wood traversed by golden sunbeams, a nymph, in the costume of Correggio's "Antiope," has fallen asleep. Guided by Cupid, a young man, who seems to be a hunter, draws near to the fair and admires her charms with an emotion full of love. The torso of the recumbent nymph is painted in magnificent, Titian-like colour, and the light effect is one of the boldest ever attempted by any painter.

I do not care so much for the "Three Graces adorning a Term of Hymen." The Graces — who are

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probably portraits — are suspending garlands of flowers, and are dressed like decent Graces, but in the English fashion of the day, which deprives them of some of their charm.

Let me end here this study of Reynolds; let us be satisfied with the superb specimens I have described. I could, no doubt, make my work more complete, but what I have said will suffice, I hope, to make known this master, who is the honour of the British school.

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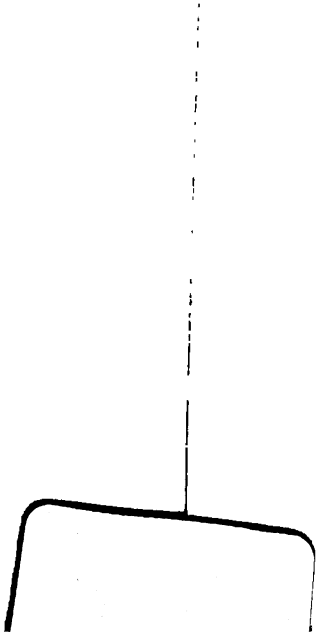

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